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*THE SECOND  
GREAT WAR*















Photo, British Official

# FIELD-MARSHAL MONTGOMERY INVESTS RED ARMY LEADERS WITH BRITISH HONOURS

On July 12, 1945, the Four-Power Komendatura (Military Government) assumed control in Berlin. The same day Field-Marshal Montgomery arrived to attend a ceremony at the Brandenburg Gate which was at the boundary between the British and Soviet zones. Here he invested Marshal Zhukov, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Red Army, formerly commanding the 1st White Russian Army, with the G.C.B.; and Marshal Rokossovsky, commanding the 2nd White Russian Army, with the K.C.B. He also invested with the K.B.E. Generals Malinin and Sokolovsky, respectively Chiefs of Staff to Marshal Rokossovsky and Marshal Zhukov. Field-Marshal Montgomery is seen here with Marshal Rokossovsky (left) and Marshal Zhukov after the investiture.



# THE SECOND GREAT WAR

## *A Standard History*

Edited by

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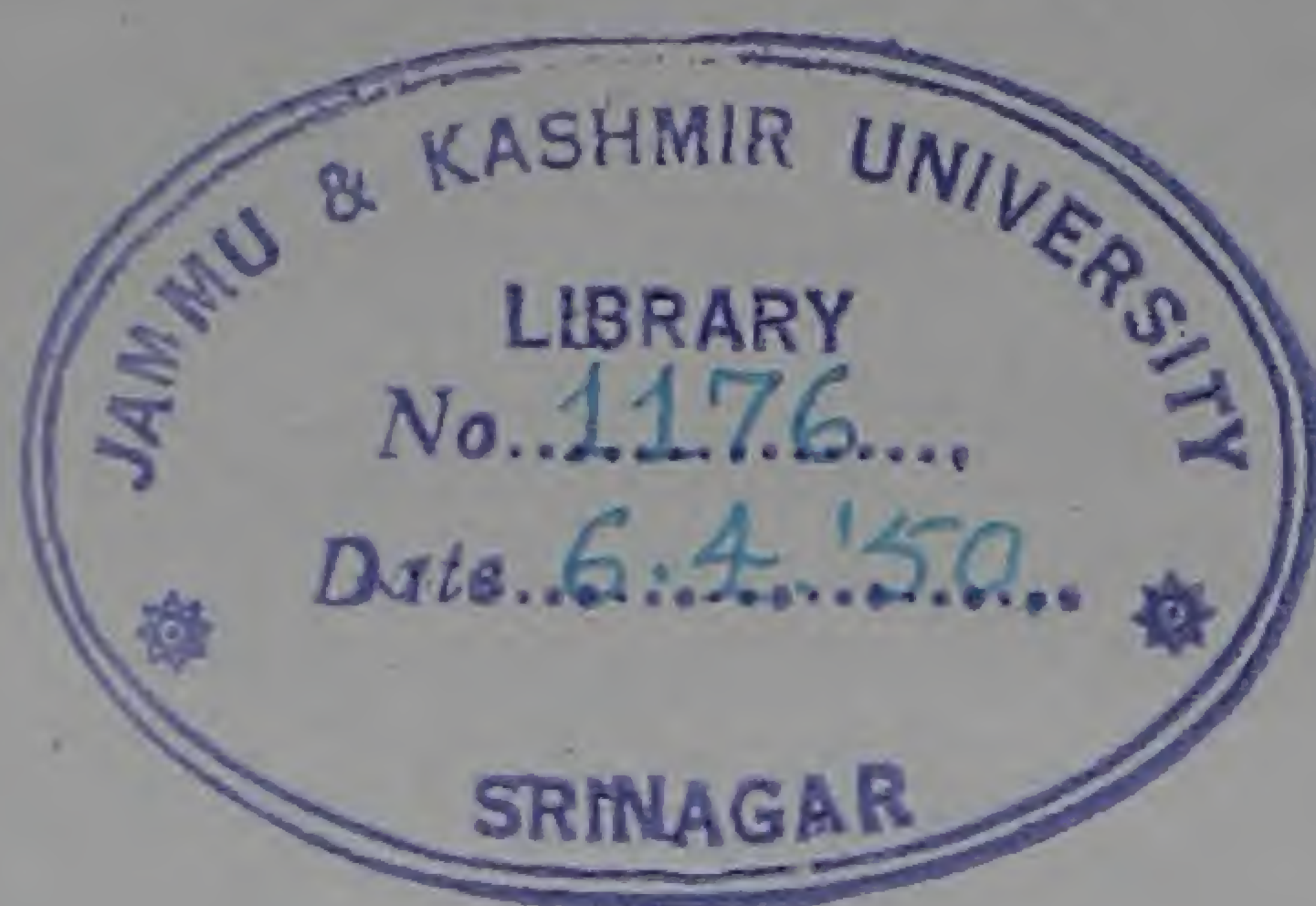
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#### CANADIAN-SCOTTISH NEAR THE HOCHWALD

On the Rhine-Maas front, infantry of the 1st Canadian Army, with powerful tank support, captured Udem on February 27, 1945. A small town on the Goch-Wesel railway, Udem had strategic importance as a road centre. It was carried in an assault by a Canadian-Scottish battalion which later advanced into the Hochwald and surrounded Calcar next day. Here a stretcher-party trudges through ruined Udem.

*Photo, British Newspaper Pool*





### U.S. 1st ARMY TAKES COLOGNE AND REACHES THE RHINE

Cologne, third city of the Reich, fell to the U.S. 1st Army on March 6, 1945. Little resistance was encountered at the end. Above, a captured German Mark V tank outside the famous cathedral, which had been saved by blast walls from serious damage. Below, the devastated city after its capture, with the main railway station in the foreground, and (left) the Hohenzollern bridge: the only bridge standing across the Rhine when the Americans entered the city, it collapsed soon afterwards as a result of earlier Allied bombing.

*Photos, British Official ; Associated Press*





# MIDDLE EAST NEUTRALS DECLARE WAR

*The most significant development in the Middle East during early 1945 was perhaps the declaration of war on Germany and Japan by Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the Lebanon. Zionist claims in Palestine, the strengthening of the Arab League and problems associated with the evacuation of Allied occupation troops were other dominating points in the 1945 history of the area. Events in the Middle East in 1944 are recorded in Chapter 303*

**T**HE defeat of the Axis Powers was, by the beginning of 1945, regarded with such certainty that the only question was when the final collapse would come. The Crimea Conference of the Three Great Powers, which took place in February (see page 3563), decided, among other things, that to qualify for invitation to the United Nations Conference to be held at San Francisco in April, those States which had hitherto been either neutral or not actively belligerent must declare war on the Axis, and adhere to the United Nations' declaration of January 1, 1942, before March 1. On their way

**EGYPT** home from the Crimea, Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt had conversations in Egypt with King Farouk of Egypt, King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia, and Sayed Shukri al-Kawatly, President of Syria. Declarations of war on Germany and Japan followed in Egypt on February 24, in Syria on the 26th, in the Lebanon on the 27th, and in Saudi Arabia on the 28th.

In Egypt, this declaration led to the death of the Prime Minister, Dr. Ahmed Maher Pasha, who was assassinated on February 24 as he was crossing the Pharaonic Hall of the Parliament buildings: he had just come from a secret session of the Chamber at which he had secured the agreement of that body to the declaration of war on the Axis, and was on his way to address the Senate on the same matter. His assailant was a young lawyer, Mahmud Issawy, who had previously been under arrest for pro-Nazi sympathies. On further investigation the police found that he belonged to the Young Egypt Society, which was a definitely Fascist organization. After condemnation by a military court, he was executed on September 18.

The King immediately appointed Mahmud Fahmy el-Noukrachy Pasha, the Foreign Minister, as Prime Minister, and he carried on with the same Cabinet.

The dismissal by King Farouk in 1944 of the Prime Minister Nahas Pasha and his Government (see page 3056) had ended for a time at least the influence of the Wafdist Party on the direction

of affairs in Egypt. Charges of corruption against that Party had been made, and appear to have influenced the action of the King in appointing Ahmed Maher Pasha Prime Minister and dissolving Parliament. Before the General Election, held on January 8, Nahas Pasha petitioned the King for the creation of a Coalition Government to conduct the elections. It must be remembered that eighty per cent of the population of Egypt is illiterate and this, coupled with the tendency of the civil service to interfere in politics, favours the Government which conducts the elections. It was because of the likelihood of electoral interference by any Government conducting elections that Nahas Pasha asked for a Coalition until the results of the election were announced. But the King refused to take any action, merely passing the request over to the new Prime Minister. As a result the Wafdist Party boycotted the elections. Since the Wafd was the only Party that had even the vaguest policy of social reform, the new Parliament

consisted entirely of what might be called the Parties of the Right and Centre.

The war and the presence of considerable armed forces in the Middle East had resulted in a relative scarcity of goods, a considerable increase in note circulation, and a consequent inflation of the economy

## Financial Benefits of the War

of Egypt. In the absence of direct taxation, large fortunes had been made at one end of the social scale, but even the fellaheen had felt some benefit, for the higher prices he received had enabled him to some extent to reduce his indebtedness, and Egypt's credit in sterling balances in Great Britain rose still further. The desire of Egypt to convert a portion of this into dollars to enable her to purchase on an increased scale from the United States was partly met by the Anglo-American financial agreement, provisionally signed later in the year, ratified by the British Parliament but still at the end of 1945 not sanctioned by Congress.



## CLEARING UP THE NAZI TRAIL IN THE DESERT

During Rommel's retreat from Egypt in 1943, the German armies left many areas thickly strewn with mines and live ammunition. In 1945 these mines and booby traps were still being detected and destroyed by experts of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, and the loose ammunition blown up. Here a sergeant of the R.A.O.C. prepares enemy ammunition for destruction in a desert oasis in Cyrenaica.

*Photo, British Official*





### SEQUEL TO YALTA

On their way home from the Crimea Conference in February 1945, Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt had meetings in Cairo with the heads of State of Middle East and other countries. 1. Mr. Churchill with King Farouk of Egypt. 2. The British Premier and King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia. 3. On board a U.S. warship, President Roosevelt chats with the Emperor of Abyssinia, Haile Selassie.

*Photos, British Official ; Fox Photos*

on August 22 that H.M. Government would, at the proper time, approach the question of revision "with the same friendliness and appreciation of our mutual interests as characterized the concluding part of the Egyptian Premier's speech."

Noukrachy Pasha repeated the demands for the withdrawal of foreign troops and the unification of the Nile valley in a statement he made on September 25 following a meeting in Alexandria of a Consultative Committee of Egyptian "Elder Statesmen"; and King Farouk, opening the Egyptian Parliament on November 12, included these demands in his Speech from the Throne. A formal request for the revision of the treaty, made by the Egyptian Government in a note sent to Britain on December 20, received a reply a month later expressing Britain's readiness to review the treaty arrangements.

At the beginning of 1945 Turkey was still neutral; but the decision of the Crimea Conference relating to invitations to San Francisco (see page 3579) forced the issue for her. The Turkish Parlia-

ment was summoned, and after hearing a speech from the Foreign Minister, Hasan Saka, decided unanimously on February 22 to declare war on Germany and Japan as from March 1.

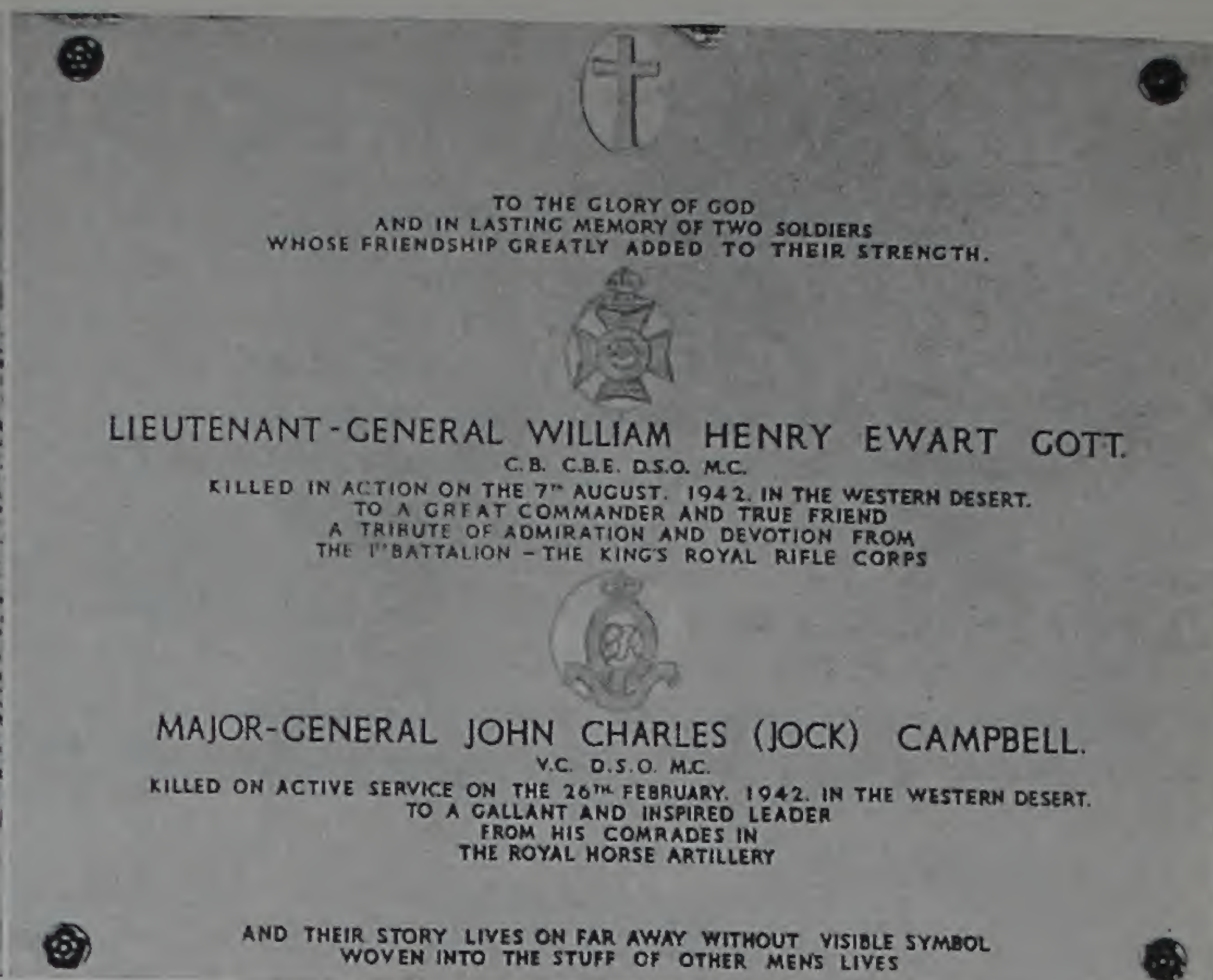
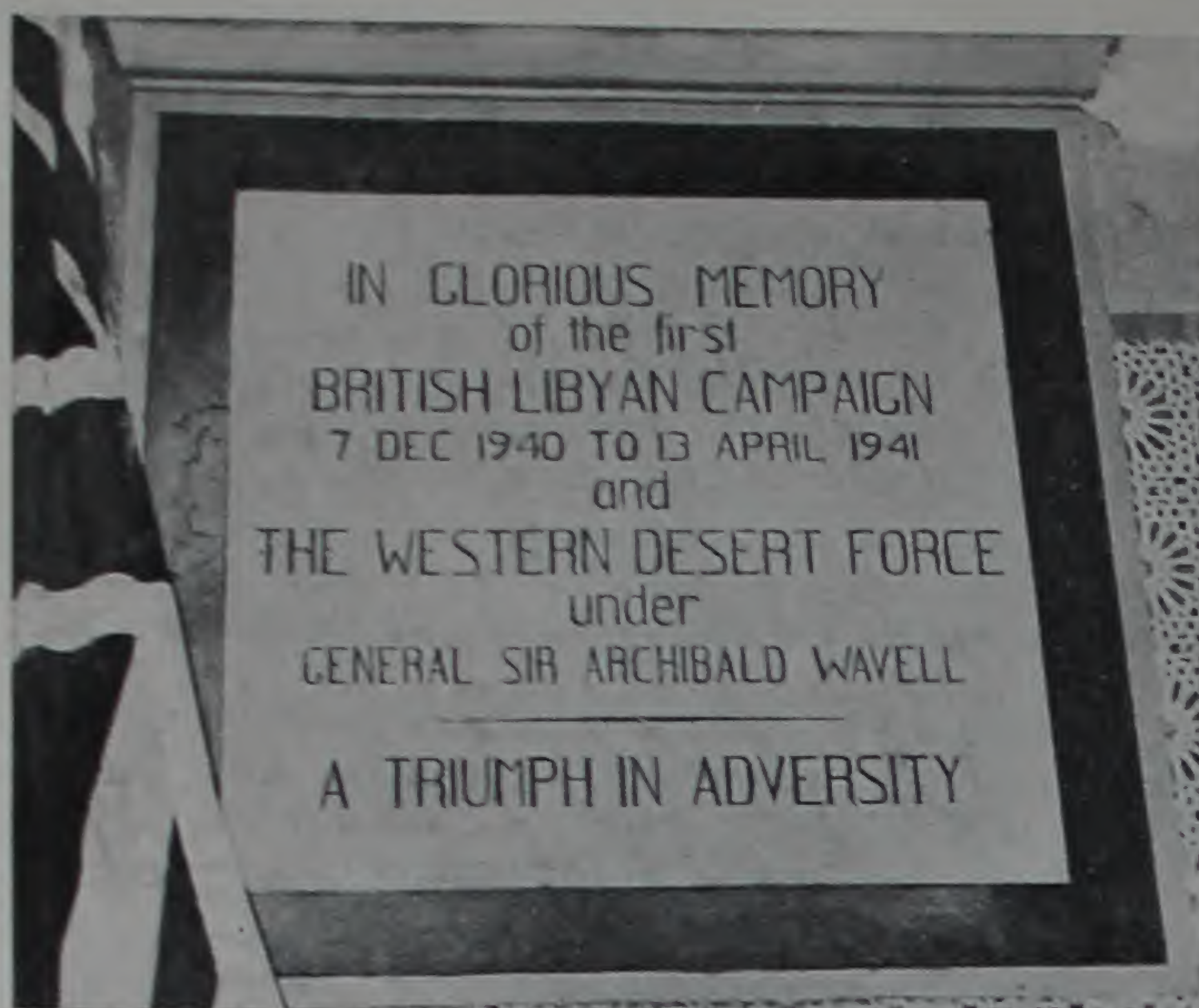
On March 19 a most important development in Turkey's foreign relations took place when the Soviet Union denounced the Soviet-Turkish Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality signed in 1925. The Soviet press, commenting on this step, spoke of the different international conditions prevailing in 1945 and 1925. Then, it was said, Great Britain was hostile to the Soviet Union, and the United States was not even in diplomatic relations with her. Now the Soviet Union was in close co-operation with Britain and the United States, and the Soviet-Turkish Treaty was not of such vital importance to her.

The real reason for the Soviet Union's action was thought to be the desire to secure a revision of the Montreux Convention of 1936 (see page 719). It had been known for some time that the

Soviet Union was returning to her old demands for the right of passage for her ships through the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus into the Mediterranean, and the right to control entry of ships into the Black Sea in wartime, and on June 22, Mr. Vinogradov, Soviet Ambassador, suggested the conclusion of a new Treaty of Friendship on condition that Turkey agreed to a revision of the Montreux Convention, the cession of bases in the Straits to the U.S.S.R., and the return of Kars, Artvin and Ardahan to the Causasian Republics of the Soviet Union.

These areas had been ceded to Turkey by agreement after the First Great War, when Russia had voluntarily withdrawn from considerable areas of the Trans-Caucasus, but the suggestion made in some quarters that advantage had been taken of Russia's weakness at that time was deprecated by Mr. Sarajoglu, the Premier, when he said, "In the days when Russia could be regarded as weak, Turkey could be regarded as so weak as to be non-existent." The demand for these territories, however, was possibly a bargaining counter to secure the revision of the Montreux Convention which, after her experience in the Second Great War, the Soviet Union felt to be vital to her.





### REMEMBERING THE DEAD OF THE DESERT WAR

Left, plaque commemorating the British Libyan Campaign of 1940-41 and the heroism of the Western Desert Force under General Sir Archibald Wavell, unveiled on January 15, 1946, by General Sir Bernard Paget, C.-in-C., Middle East. It is in what was Marshal Graziani's palace in Benghazi. Right, memorial in All Saints' Cathedral, Cairo, unveiled by General Paget on October 17, 1945. (See illus. in pages 2007 and 2225.)

*Photos, British Official*

After the adherence in January of Saudi Arabia and the Yemen to the Pan-Arab Protocol signed in Alexandria in October 1944 (see page 3055), King Farouk visited King Ibn Saud for informal conversation on Pan-Arab co-operation, carried an important step further when, on March 17, the Prime Ministers of Egypt, Syria, the Lebanon, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, together with Musa el Alami representing

the Arabs of Palestine, met in Cairo for further discussions on the proposed formation of an Arab League—a movement undoubtedly brought into being by the Zionist threat to the position of the Arabs in Palestine. Five days later they signed the Pact of the Union of the Arab States, which provided for the setting up of a League of Arab States with permanent headquarters in Cairo “by those independent Arab countries who wish to join it,” with a Council on which representatives of all member States would act on an equal footing.

The objects of this League were: to foster co-operation between the States participating; to forbid the use of force in the settlement of disputes between them; to set up commissions to promote inter-Arab economic and cultural co-operation. This meeting of Prime Ministers also reiterated the views expressed at the meeting of October 1944 on the status of Palestine.

With the end of the war against the Axis Powers, a rise of nationalism in Egypt could be observed. The Wafdist Party, now in sullen opposition, became the centre of considerable anti-British agitation in spite of the fact that Nahas Pasha, while in office, had been markedly pro-British. The retirement by the Government of all British police officers, including Sir Thomas Russell Pasha, commandant of the Cairo police and organizer of the anti-narcotic campaign, T. Baker Pasha, commandant of the Alexandria police, and T. W. Fitzpatrick Pasha, commandant of the Suez Canal police, was announced on August 22; while on August 6 the Prime

Minister declared in the Senate that the time had come for the revision of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936, the abolition of all restrictions on the sovereignty of Egypt, and the withdrawal of all foreign troops. He also demanded the unity of the Nile valley (which meant the withdrawal of Britain from the Condominium of the Sudan) and the withdrawal of all British troops from the Suez Canal.

The treaty provided that if both parties were in agreement it could be revised after a period of ten years, and the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Ernest Bevin, stated in the House

### EGYPT'S NEW PREMIER

On February 24, 1945, Dr. Ahmed Maher Pasha, the Premier, was assassinated in Cairo. King Farouk at once appointed as his successor Mahmud Fahmy el-Noukrachy Pasha, the Foreign Minister, here seen with Lord Killearn (formerly Sir Miles Lampson), British Ambassador to Egypt and High Commissioner for the Sudan since 1936.



### DESERT BALLOT-BOX

So that British forces overseas could vote in the General Election of July 1945, over 40 tons of ballot papers were carried to them by the R.A.F. In the Middle East, polling booths—with special precautions to ensure secrecy—were improvised in the desert. Some ballot-boxes were made from German ammunition containers. This R.A. officer deposits his vote in a desert ballot-box.





The Treaty of Friendship expired on November 7, and Soviet pressure on Turkey increased. Denunciations in the Soviet Press of the position Turkey had taken during the war grew more violent, and growing claims were made on Turkish territory. Student demonstrations in Istanbul on December 4, when left wing newspaper offices and bookshops were attacked, added to the tension. Mr. Hasan Saka continued to stress the need for friendly relations between the two countries, but declared, "We ask nothing of anyone, but at the same time we will yield nothing." The situation had not been resolved by the end of the year.

During 1945 Iraq continued to play a leading part in the movement to obtain close co-operation between the Arab States of the Middle East. Thus, Iraq

was represented at the discussions at Cairo in March which produced

the League of Arab States (see page 3580). Nuri Pasha, former Iraq Prime Minister and now President of the Senate, had been largely instrumental in bringing the whole movement about and took an active part in these further developments. As in Egypt, the Zionist threat in Palestine was keenly felt also in Iraq.

During the summer, trouble developed in Iraqi Kurdistan, where Kurds under a local chief, Mullah Mustafa, caused local conflict. Mullah Mustafa finally fled across the borders into Persia where he made contact with the Russians. The trouble was largely due to tribal movements at certain times of the year. Iraq, like her neighbours, wanted to settle these nomads on cultivable land and so reduce their movements to a minimum.

With the defeat of the Axis Powers, British and American troops were in the course of the summer steadily withdrawn from the Trans-Persian road and from the railway running from Ahwaz to the Caspian. By the end of the year only a few establishments were left at the Iraqi terminals of these routes, and they were engaged in clearing up.

Rashid Ali el Gailani, leader of the 1941 revolt in Iraq (see Chapter 165 and page 2211) arrived at Beirut secretly as a stoker in the French steamship "Marrakesh" in June, and subsequently reached Saudi Arabia, where he sought and found sanctuary. Mr. Bevin stated in the House of Commons that he was reported to have travelled after Germany's defeat from Austria to Brussels, Paris and Marseilles; that he was not listed as a war criminal, but was a traitor to Iraq; and that he was satisfied Rashid Ali had entered Saudi Arabia without the permission or

previous knowledge of the government there. King Ibn Saud, questioned on the matter during a visit he paid to Egypt in January 1946, stated that he had never concealed his disapproval of the revolt, but could not refuse Rashid Ali sanctuary as a refugee. "If our sister country demands that I should hand him over," he declared, "I shall reply that he is sheltering under our protection, and I would rather give up some of my sons instead."

The state of tension existing in Syria and the Lebanon at the turn of the year (see page 3059) came to a head in May, involving also Franco-British relations.



#### TURKEY AT WAR

The Turkish National Assembly, the *Kamutay*, at a specially convened session on February 22, 1945, decided by a unanimous vote of all 401 representatives to declare war on Germany and Japan as from March 1. Mr. Sukru Sarajoglu, the Prime Minister, is here speaking during the brief debate which preceded the taking of the vote on the issue.

*Photo, British Official*

In the early part of the month, General Etienne Beynet, French Delegate-General for the Levant States, visited

Paris to receive instructions for the negotiation of new treaties with SYRIA AND LEBANON

designed to "settle the problems raised by the substitution of a regime of independence for the French mandate and to guarantee the cultural, economic and strategic interests of France." The French demanded the right to establish naval and air bases and to maintain troops under French command in the Republics, but proposed that the *troupes spéciales*, a gendarmerie composed of

Syrians and Lebanese under French command, and trained, equipped, paid and officered by the French, should be made over to the Syrian and Lebanese Governments.

General Beynet returned to the Levant, and while negotiations were proceeding, some French troops were landed at Beirut on May 17. Feeling became acute. The Syrian and Lebanese Foreign Ministers issued a joint statement on the 21st declaring that the landing of French troops without the consent of their Governments constituted an infringement of the sovereignty of their States, that they would not continue negotiations with the French, and that all responsibility for the situation rested with France. A demand was also made for the withdrawal of all foreign troops now that the war was over. Anti-French demonstrations started, in which French citizens were killed and injured; and the statement by General Beynet on May 25 that the newly arrived troops were replacement troops did not lighten the tension.

Regret expressed by the British Foreign Office that the dispatch of French troops to the Levant had led to the breaking off of the negotiations that had been going forward and the state-  
ment that it was in  
Britain  
Intervenes  
consultation with all concerned and with the U.S. Government, was followed by a broadcast from Mr. Bidault, the French Foreign Minister, in which he said that "malicious propaganda and distorted information" had inferred, from the necessary relief of two French battalions serving in the Levant, that "France was resorting to intimidation and blackmail, and that she was trying to obtain by the display of force what she believed she could not obtain by negotiations."

Fierce fighting lasting several hours broke out in Damascus on the evening of May 29 between French troops and Syrians. Accusations were made by both sides as to the incidence of the outbreak. Heavy damage to property and many civilian casualties were caused by French artillery, which opened fire in many parts of Damascus. A general strike was called in Beirut on the 30th. Serious disorders were also said to have occurred in Aleppo, Homs and Hama. Next day, Mr. Eden, British Foreign Minister, stated in the House of Commons that in a message to General de Gaulle, the Prime Minister had said: "In view of the grave situation which has arisen between your troops and the Levant States and the severe fighting which



has broken out, we have, with profound regret, ordered the C-in-C. Middle East to intervene to prevent a further effusion of blood in the interests of the security of the whole Middle East, which involves communications for the war against Japan. In order to avoid collision between British and French forces we request you immediately to order the French troops to cease fire and withdraw to their barracks. Once firing has ceased and order has been restored we shall be prepared to begin tripartite talks in London."

Mr. Grew, Under-Secretary of State, said in Washington that the U.S. Government had been advised, and approved, of British intervention.

On June 1, General de Gaulle, in a broadcast, after stating that French troops in Syria had been attacked sporadically by armed bands, and had

**General de Gaulle Replies** been compelled to defend themselves, went on to say that orders had been

given to the French forces in the Levant to cease fire, and to stand on their positions. At a press conference he expressed the view that the difficulties in the Levant countries had arisen as a result of the British attitude, adding "to solve this unfortunate situation, France is ready for negotiations on the question as a whole, not only in connexion with Syria and the Lebanon, but the whole Arab world, for the U.S.A. and Soviet Russia are also interested in this . . . The French view is that the question might provide an opportunity for international co-operation such as is contemplated at San Francisco." Replying to questions, he recalled that during the war while all French troops except 4,000-5,000 were withdrawn from the Levant, notably to fight at Bir-Hakeim (see Chapter 224), 600,000 British troops (the British 9th Army) remained in that area.

On June 3 the French garrison in Damascus, some 3,000 men, withdrew to a camp about five miles away, under British escort, and French civilians were evacuated next day.

On June 5 the French Cabinet proposed that the whole position in the Middle East should be submitted to a conference of the "Big Five" (Britain, Russia, U.S.A., France, China), a suggestion welcomed by the Syrian Premier. The tension between France and Britain was eased by the moderate tone of a debate held in July in the Consultative Assembly, General de Gaulle concluding his reply to the debate, "We feel profoundly the community of interests which despite everything has kept Britain and France side by



### BRITISH INTERVENTION IN SYRIA

On May 31, 1945, the British Government ordered General Sir Bernard Paget, C-in-C., Middle East, to intervene in Syria, where fighting had occurred between Syrians and the French troops in the country under the French mandate. 1. General Paget with Mr. Thomas Shone, the British Minister, leaves Beirut for Damascus. 2. British armoured car in Damascus, and 3. Wreckage in the bazaar quarter caused by French shelling.

*Photos, British Official ; Keystone*





side during these thirty years of war, but we ask that this friendship be also respected in the person of France."

Negotiations between General Beynet and Mr. Henri Pharaon, Prime Minister of the Lebanon, resulted in the handing over of more than 24,000 *troupes spéciales* without incident between July 22 and August 7; but continued presence of Allied troops was raised at the Security Council of the United Nations Organization when it met in London in February 1946 by the Syrian and Lebanese delegates, but in a conciliatory spirit (see Chapter 387). A plan for simultaneous withdrawal from Syria between March 11 and April 30 was arrived at by the French and British on March 4. On March 10, evacuation of British troops from the Lebanon by June 30, 1946, and of French troops by April 1, 1947 was announced.

The coming of peace saw no improvement in the Palestine situation. Indeed, towards the end of 1945 a sharpening of the Jewish-Arab conflict

**PALESTINE** seemed in progress. The activities of the Stern Group (see pages 2642 and 3059) culminated in December in the blowing up of Police Headquarters in Jerusalem, while systematic outbreaks of violence all over Palestine indicated that they were organized from a centre. The aim of the extreme section of the Zionists was to break down the immigration restrictions and so create a Jewish majority in the country which would make it feasible to turn it into a Jewish State instead of simply the Jewish National Home contemplated in the Balfour Declaration. Illegal immigration along the lonely coast of Palestine continued.

The coming of the Labour Government in Great Britain during the summer aroused the hopes of the Zionists, for the Labour Party was committed by a series of conference resolutions in previous years to the extreme Zionist programme of a Jewish State. The Labour Government, however, on coming to power recognized the practical difficulties involved, and in November Mr. Bevin announced in the House of Commons that, at the suggestion of Great Britain, a joint Anglo-American commission of enquiry would be appointed to enquire into the situation resulting from the presence of destitute Jews in Europe and to make recommendations on the best method of settling them either in Palestine or in other parts of the world. This commission was a result of the situation created by a strong resolution of the United States Congress in the early autumn asking for the opening of

the doors of Palestine to Jewish immigration. The Arabs, meanwhile, fortified by the existence of the Arab League, showed every sign of determined resistance to further Jewish immigration. Mr. Bevin's announcement met with approval from the Arabs of the Middle East as showing that the new British Government was not going to be rushed into a policy at variance with the White Paper.

The association of the United States in this enquiry brought that country into direct contact with the problem of Palestine, which it had hitherto regarded from afar. The commission,



#### PALESTINE COMMISSIONER

The appointment was announced on November 8, 1944, as High Commissioner for Palestine and Transjordan, of Lieut.-General Sir Alan Cunningham, conqueror of Italian East Africa in the campaign of 1940-41 (see Chapters 163 and 164). Here he is arriving at Lydda airport for the swearing-in ceremony at Jerusalem on November 21. On his left (holding hat) is Mr. J. V. W. Shaw, Acting High Commissioner following Lord Gort's resignation.

appointed in December, issued a report (published as Government Blue Book Cmd. 6808, 1s. 3d.) on May 1, the chief recommendations of which were: (1) as Palestine could not alone absorb all the displaced Jews for whom homes had to be found, the whole world should share the responsibility; (2) 100,000 certificates of admission to Palestine should be authorized during 1946 for Jewish victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution; (3) Palestine should become neither a Jewish nor an Arab State, but a form of government should be set up which would protect the interests in the Holy Land of Christendom and of the Muslem and Jewish

faiths; (4) as, pending the cessation of Jewish-Arab hostility, to establish an independent Palestine State (or States) would result in civil strife that might threaten the peace of the world, the government of Palestine should continue "as at present under mandate pending the execution of a trusteeship agreement under the United Nations."

Shortly after the end of fighting in Europe, Persia requested that all foreign troops be withdrawn from her soil. Dis- **PERSIA** cussions at Potsdam (see Chapter 380) led to an announcement in London on August 8 that British and Russian troops were to be immediately withdrawn. (By that date, the greater part of the American troops had already left.)

Under the Anglo-Soviet-Persian Treaty of 1942 (see page 2504), the last date for withdrawal was set at six months after the cessation of hostilities, which brought it to March 2, 1946. The British Government favoured an earlier date—December 1945—and Anglo-Soviet discussions on the matter were continuing when the issue was complicated by a rising in Persian Azerbaijan in November, and the refusal of the Soviet occupying authorities there to allow Persian troops, sent to put down the revolt, to enter the province. The British Government sent a note to Moscow expressing the hope that the Soviet commander in Persia would be instructed not to interfere with the Persian Government's sovereignty in its own territory. The U.S. Government urged both the British and Soviet Governments to withdraw all troops from Persia by January 1946.

The Soviet Government, however, took the stand that the matter was one for purely Persian-Soviet discussion and settlement, despite the tripartite treaty, and this was still the international situation when the Persian Government presented its case for consideration to the first meeting of the Security Council of the United Nations Organization (see Chapter 387).

The need for reforms in Persia, and the desire for them in various sections of the population, was undoubted, but the spontaneity of the movement in Azerbaijan was in some doubt, as was the validity of the elections held in November (in which only a fraction of the population voted) which confirmed the autonomous government set up by the insurgents at Tabriz. The fact that Azerbaijan was completely shut off by the Soviet occupying authorities from outside contacts added lack of reliable information to the other difficulties of the situation.





#### LAWLESSNESS IN PALESTINE

The closing months of 1945 saw increasing outbreaks of violence by the Jews in Palestine. On October 31-November 1 rail sabotage occurred at many places, including Lydda where the signal-box, a train and three locomotives were blown up and a British soldier and a Palestinian policeman killed. 1. Palestine Police clear the wreckage at Lydda. 2. Police patrol-boat returns to Haifa after a search for illegal immigrants. 3. Sixth Airborne Division troops examine travellers' papers. 4. Parade of mobile picket of Palestine Police Force armed with rifle, bren-gun, pick helve and metal shield to disperse rioters.

*Photos, Associated Press; New York Times Photos; G.P.U.*



**February 1.** U.S. 7th Army crossed Moder near Bischweiler; R.A.F. bombed München-Gladbach; by night attacked Mainz, Ludwigshaven and Berlin. 2nd White Russian Army stormed Torun on the Vistula; Marshal Zhukov captured Schwerin. U.S. India-based Super-Fortresses sank King George V graving-dock at Singapore.

**February 2.** French 1st Army liberated Colmar (Alsace). Heavy R.A.F. attacks (by night) on Karlsruhe and Wiesbaden. Red Army reached Drossen. Australians on Bougainville (Solomons) cleared enemy from lower end of Empress Augusta Bay.

**February 3.** U.S.A. 8th A.F. in strength attacked Berlin at noon; by night R.A.F. Lancasters bombed oil plants at Bottrop and Dortmund. Red Army captured Sternberg and Reppen, near Frankfurt.

**February 4.** U.S. 1st Army pierced main Siegfried defences E. of Monschau; U.S. 3rd Army crossed Our, captured Bleialf. R.A.F. bombed enemy shipping in Gulf of Danzig. 1st Ukrainian Army forced Oder, S.E. of Breslau. U.S. troops of 5th Army recaptured Galliciano (Serchio Valley, Italy). Africans took Minbya (Burma); Ywathithgyi captured.

**February 4-12.** Three-Power Conference at Yalta, Crimea, attended by Mr. Churchill, President Roosevelt and Marshal Stalin.

**February 5.** U.S. 1st Army captured Hellenthal in Siegfried Line. Australians made new landing in New Britain. Announced that U.S. 1st Army had reverted to General Omar Bradley's command.

**February 6.** U.S. troops under French command stormed Neuf Brisach (Alsace); French troops seized Münster (Vosges). U.S.A. 8th A.F. in strength bombed Magdeburg, Leipzig and Chemnitz areas. Russians took Arnsdorf (E. Prussia). General MacArthur proclaimed fall of Manila.

**February 7.** R.A.F. by night and in great strength bombed Goch, Cleve, Magdeburg, Kassel, Mainz, Coblenz, Bonn, Hanover, Düsseldorf and Duisburg. Belgian Government resigned.

**February 8.** 1st Canadian Army renewed offensive S.E. of Nijmegen. U.S. 1st Army captured Schmidt in Hürtgen Forest. R.A.F. made major attacks on Politz (Stettin) and Wanne-Eickel (Ruhr) oil-plants. Marshal Koniev's forces crossed Oder N.W. of Breslau.

**February 9.** U.S. 3rd Army crossed the Prüm River. In Alsace the Colmar pocket liquidated with French and U.S. troops on the Rhine from Herlisheim to Swiss frontier opposite Basle. U.S.A. 8th A.F. heavily bombed Weimar, Magdeburg and Lutzkendorf oil-plants.

**February 10-11 (night).** Germans blew up floodgates and controls of Schwammenauel Dam and sluices leading to Urfttalsperre reservoir and the Rurstaalsee.

**February 10.** Canadians reached W. bank of Rhine. Announced that French 1st Army had completed destruction of German 1st Army. Heavy R.A.F. Mosquito attack on Hanover. 2nd White Russian Army captured Elbing (Baltic). XV Indian Corps took Ramree town (Arakan). Marianas-based Super-Fortresses bombed Tokyo and Yokohama areas.

**February 11.** 1st Ukrainian Army broke through enemy defences on W. bank of the Oder, capturing Liegnitz (Lower Silesia); 1st White Russian Army took Deutsch-Krone and Markisch-Friedland (Pomerania). India-based Super-Fortresses and "heavies" of Eastern Air Command struck at Rangoon area; other Super-Fortresses bombed Ota, near Tokyo.

**February 11-12 (night).** 20th Indian Division crossed Irrawaddy at Myinmu.

**February 12.** Scottish troops of 1st Canadian Army took Cleve; U.S. 3rd Army captured Prüm. Red Army stormed Bunzlau on Bober River; captured Bielsko (Poland). Treaty between Greek Government and E.A.M. Three-Power statement issued from Yalta.

**February 13.** R.A.F. by night heavily attacked Dresden twice. Last resistance ceased in Budapest. In Central Burma 19th Indian Division took Singu, 40 miles N. of Mandalay.

**February 14.** R.A.F. made severe double attack on Chemnitz (night). 1st White Russian Army captured Schneidemühl (Pomerania). Announced in Melbourne that over 200 R.A.A.F. Morotai-based Kittyhawks and Beaufighters had destroyed Japanese base of Tohohon (N. Celebes) in attacks over five days. Capture of Pagan (Burma). Mr. Churchill arrived in Athens with Mr. Eden and Field-Marshal Alexander.

**February 15.** Scottish troops established bridge-head over Niers River at Kessel. U.S.A. 8th A.F. heavily bombed Kottbus. 2nd White Russian Army captured Konitz and Tuchola (W. Poland). Tito's forces freed Mostar, capital of Herzegovina. Chinese troops took Kutkai, 48 miles N. of Lashio. U.S. forces completed capture of Bataan Peninsula.

**February 16.** Red Army forces under Marshals Koniev and Zhukov linked up at Grünberg (Silesia). Powerful U.S. force of carrier-based bombers attacked Tokyo and Yokohama; U.S. naval units bombarded Iwo Jima and Bonin Islands.

**February 17.** XV Indian Corps landed at Ru-Ywa (Arakan). U.S. carrier-based bombers kept up attacks on Tokyo region and naval forces bombardment of Iwo Jima. Corregidor (Philippines) captured by U.S. troops.

**February 18.** Field-Marshal Montgomery told 21st Army Group: "We stand ready for the last round." Red Army took Sagan; death in action of General I. D. Chernyakhovsky, commanding 3rd White Russian Army, Russia's youngest general.

**February 18-19.** 5th Army troops drove enemy from Monte Belvedere (Italy).

**February 19.** Marianas-based Super-Fortresses heavily bombed Tokyo. U.S. forces landed in great strength on Iwo Jima (Volcano Islands).

**February 20.** Nuremberg heavily bombed by U.S.A. 8th A.F.; U.S.A. 15th A.F. attacked Berchtesgaden. Soviet aircraft heavily bombed Breslau, Stettin, and Stargard. Motoyama airfield (Iwo Jima) captured.

**February 21.** 1st Canadian Army captured Goch. Nuremberg again heavily bombed. Russians took Czersk (N.W. Poland); Red Air Force made mass night raids on Königsberg.

**February 22.** U.S. 3rd Army completed liberation of Luxemburg. Over 6,000 Allied aircraft attacked some 30 rail centres in Central Germany. Soviets reached the Neisse River below Guben. Over 2,500 aircraft of the M.A.A.F. bombed communications in Bavaria, Austria, and N. Italy.

**February 23.** U.S. 1st and 9th Armies attacked across Roer. 1st White Russian Army captured Poznan (Poland). U.S. marines took Mt. Suribachi (Iwo Jima).

**February 24.** U.S. 9th Army took Jülich. R.A.F. heavily bombed Berlin (night). Brazilians took Bella Vista and La Serra (Italy). Surrender of Intramuros, last Japanese stronghold at Manila. Egypt declared war on Germany and Japan.

**February 25.** U.S. 1st Army completed occupation of Düren; U.S.A. 8th A.F. heavily attacked Munich; by night R.A.F. bombed Berlin. British 2nd Division crossed Irrawaddy near Myinmu (Burma). U.S. carrier-based bombers attacked Tokyo-Yokohama area.

**February 26.** Canadians launched offensive in Calcar-Udem sector. U.S.A. 8th A.F. heavily attacked Berlin by day; R.A.F. bombed it for the seventh successive night. Syria declared war on Germany and Japan.

**February 27.** R.A.F. bombed Berlin again. E. Africans captured Ywathit (Burma). With capture of Hill 382, half of Iwo Jima in U.S. hands.

**February 28.** U.S. 1st Army crossed Erft river; Canadians captured Calcar. Red Army took Neu-Stettin (Pomerania). Motoyama (Iwo Jima) taken by U.S. forces; last remnants of enemy garrison in Corregidor wiped out. Princess Elizabeth launched H.M.S. 'Vanguard' on the Clyde.



# LAST LANDINGS IN THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC

*In this chapter, describing the final phase of the campaign in the south-west Pacific area, Miss L. E. Cheesman covers Allied operations in New Guinea, New Britain, the Solomons and Borneo. The story is taken up from the capture in June 1944 of Biak Island off New Guinea, described in Chapter 309, and the history of the campaign is followed through to its conclusion in August 1945 with the surrender of the Japanese forces in this theatre of war*

VERY large concentrations of enemy forces still in mid-1944 occupied Buka and Bougainville in the Solomons, the Gazelle Peninsula of New Britain, and the Finsch Coast and part of Netherlands New Guinea. In all these areas the enemy was disabled by lack of air defences, and suffering through drastic interruption of his supply lines by air, sea and land. Even his coastal barge traffic was functioning only in a few localities. On the eve of the offensive for the American re-occupation of the Philippines, measures were taken to complete the severance of the main enemy communications, so that the isolated armies without chance of reinforcements could be dealt with singly, and U.S. forces were withdrawn from other areas to serve on the new battle front.

The capture by the Allies of the strategically important airfields of Biak (see page 3126) and Numfor (see page 3267 and illus. in page 3091) Islands had placed the remaining enemy-occupied territory of Netherlands New Guinea within reach of land-based

heavy bombers, which speedily convinced the Japanese that none of their positions was safe from an Allied invasion.

Owing to the nature of the terrain, they had few fortified positions. Their main base was Manokwari, east of the high mountain chains of the northern half of Vogelkop Peninsula. Northwest of this high land was a second enemy base at Sorong on Doom Island, and the Sansapor district was at one time strongly held. On the south, Fakfak garrison had been withdrawn. Babo on McCluer Gulf, centre of a rich oil-bearing area and headquarters of the Koninklijke Petroleum Compagnie and Standard Oil Company, was also deserted because all defences and oil installations had been destroyed by Allied air attacks.

The port of Manokwari is entered by narrow, buoyed channels through high, broken land. The town is built around a conical hill on which is the Dutch Resident's house, formerly a rajah's palace. A very strong Japanese garrison held this citadel, protected by

formidable defences facing the sea, from which attack was expected.

Immediately after the occupation of Biak, U.S. pilots reported much enemy activity to the south of Manokwari, where Japanese troops were feverishly endeavouring to construct tracks across immense swamps to carry heavy traffic. Their efforts were fruitless, and no enemy routes were made serviceable for a large-scale withdrawal. Few escaped by air. General MacArthur's dispatch on June 27 mentioned that Manokwari airbase was deserted, few planes remained at Sorong, and none at Babo.

On July 30, 1944, a surprise landing was made near Cape Sansapor by U.S. troops covered by the Allied Navy and R.A.A.F. Kittyhawks. There was no sea or air resistance. Next day the beach-head was extended for ten miles; Cape Sansapor itself and the village of Sansapor were captured. Only small parties of Japanese were encountered, and they fled before the advancing American troops. The occupation of the

## Japanese Try to Make Escape Roads



**Pte. PARTRIDGE**  
(8th Australian Inf. Bn.)

At Bougainville, Solomons, in July 1945 Private Frank John Partridge, though wounded in arm and thigh, won the V.C. for 'outstanding gallantry and devotion to duty.' His remarkable initiative retrieved a serious situation, inspired his comrades to 'heroic action,' leading to a successful withdrawal which saved two patrols from annihilation by the Japanese.

**Cpl. MACKAY**  
(2/3 Aust. Pioneer Bn.)

East of Tarakan, Borneo, on May 12, 1945, Corporal John Bernard Mackey won the V.C. for 'most conspicuous bravery' in a daring action during which he was killed. In a single-handed charge up a steep hill feature he wiped out two Japanese machine-gun posts. His 'fearless action and outstanding courage' were an inspiration to the whole Battalion.

**Pte. KENNA**  
(2/4 Australian Inf. Bn.)

For his 'magnificent courage and complete disregard for his own safety' during a brief whirlwind action at Wewak, New Guinea, on May 15, 1945, Private Edward Kenna was awarded the V.C. In face of concentrated and highly accurate machine-gun fire and without orders, he single-handedly captured a menacing Japanese bunker, killing several of the enemy.

*Photos, Australian Official; Sport & General*

**Pte. STARCEVICH**  
(2/43 Australian Inf. Bn.)

At Beaufort, N. Borneo, on June 28, 1945, Pte. Leslie Starceвич rushed four enemy machine-gun posts, 'fearlessly firing his Bren gun from the hip and ignoring heavy hostile fire,' and killed 12 Japanese single-handed. For this he was awarded the V.C. His 'outstanding gallantry' in carrying out these attacks resulted in the capture of a vital objective.

**Lt. CHOWNE, M.M.**  
(Australian Infantry Bn.)

The V.C. was posthumously awarded to Lieutenant Albert Chowne, M.M. for 'most conspicuous bravery, brilliant leadership and devotion to duty' near Dagua, New Guinea, in March 1945. Although seriously wounded in the chest and under most intense machine-gun and rifle fire, he led his men to capture a strongly held enemy position. He was killed in the action.

**Cpl. RATTEY**  
(Australian Infantry Bn.)

Entirely by the 'courage, cool planning and stern determination' of Corporal Reginald Roy Rattey a serious situation in S. Bougainville, Solomons, on March 22, 1945, was turned into a 'brilliant success.' Making a bold rush by himself, he single-handedly silenced a Japanese outpost. His brave action enabled his company to gain an important objective.





### U.S. INVASION AT SANSAPOR

Covered by Australian and U.S. cruisers and R.A.A.F. Kittyhawks, U.S. forces invaded the Vogelkop Peninsula at Cape Sansapor, near the western tip of New Guinea, on July 30, 1944. The capture of the nearby islands of Middelburg and Amsterdam on the same day completed the Allied reoccupation of strategic points along the whole north coast of Netherlands New Guinea. Here crowded U.S. L.C.I.s close in on Cape Sansapor. *Photo, New York Times Photo*

islands of Middelburg (see illus. in page 3091) and Amsterdam on July 30, achieved with no fighting, completed the security of the position, and no counter-attacks developed.

The surrender of the 15,000 Japanese at Manokwari, left to their fate by the Japanese Command, and of the diminished garrison at Sorong took place only after the occupation by the Allies of Morotai and Halmahera.

Before the Japanese invasion of the south-west Pacific, Morotai Island's only inhabitants were a small number of Indonesians. Early in the campaign the Japanese made of it an important air and communication base between the Philippines and their new south-west Pacific empire.

The Allied landing on Morotai took place on September 14 on the west coast under the personal command of General MacArthur.

The Japanese were prepared for an attack from the south where they had fortified the beaches. Pitoe airfield, captured on the first day, was unfinished but was speedily made serviceable by the R.A.A.F. engineers. Within a few days all the south-west area of the island was in Allied hands and the air strips were being reconditioned.

During the first landing, the second and third waves of landing craft grounded on a reef a hundred yards from the shore, and it was proof of the absence of enemy air reconnaissance that no advantage was taken of

the accident. All troops got ashore in safety, although 24 hours later the beach was still littered with stranded vehicles. The nearest Japanese bombers were based on the Philippines, and the aircraft on Morotai destroyed by the Allies in earlier raids had never been replaced. By September 17 the Allies were in control of the island. The remaining Japanese had fled to the hills and the Americans were holding a strong line in advance of proposed sites for an airfield and a naval base, on which U.S. engineers were already at work.

Patrolling was active, but as the Japanese did not attack they were ignored, although their numbers were occasionally augmented by small parties crossing from New Guinea.

The capture of Morotai interrupted the Japanese supply line from the Philippines to Halmahera, dominated the approach to their air and naval base Morotai Kaoe Bay, and completed the isolation of the enemy garrison at Manokwari. At a later date, in January 1945, the Japanese reported that the majority of air attacks on Manila were carried out by heavy bombers based on Morotai, and it was announced in Melbourne on February 14 that over 200 R.A.A.F. Kittyhawks and Beaufighters from Morotai had, in attacks over five days, destroyed Tohoon base (Celebes) where 6,000 Japanese were established.

Incessant and severe bombing weakened the defences of Halmahera, which had been the most important enemy position in the Moluccas. Pilots of planes reported very extensive and elaborate defences on that island, but no air protection, and with communication lines cut it was merely a matter of time before the remaining forces surrendered. On November 21 General MacArthur's H.Q. reported that U.S. troops had landed in the Mapia Islands (145 miles north-west of Biak Island) and the Asia Group (130 miles north of Sorong) to destroy enemy spotting and radio stations which were giving trouble. The preliminary bombardment was carried out by a squadron of which the flagship was British—this was the first

### LAST BATTLEFIELDS IN NEW GUINEA

This relief map shows the scene of the last landings in New Guinea preceding the U.S. invasion of the Halmahera Group on September 14, 1944. Announcing the landing at Sansapor on July 30, General MacArthur pointed out that the Allies had established air bases along the entire northern coast of New Guinea from Milne Bay westwards, making enemy operations east of the Halmaheras virtually impossible.





report of operations by the Royal Navy in the south-west Pacific.

### **Finsch Coast Operations : New Guinea**

By July 11, 1944, a force of the Australian 6th Division, continuing their advance from Hansa Bay, controlled a coastal area west of Sepik River (*see* page 3125). From this position a further advance was begun in order to link with U.S. forces established since April on Driniumor River, twenty miles east of Aitape. Papuan infantry under Australian officers worked along the Australian left flank clearing the ground of enemy outposts over a wide zone. The land here consists of low flats with much swamp among reef limestone hills between the spurs of mountain chains lying to the south. The coastal road is no more than a trail in parts, winding around bluffs and following every small inlet.

In the hinterland the Japanese 18th Army, commanded by Lieutenant-General Adachi, occupied extensive areas each with a widespread system of defence. Wewak harbour, although that area was still occupied by the enemy, had ceased to be a potential naval base after the Allied occupation of Humboldt Bay and the Cyclops Mountains airfields (*see* page 3123). Enemy

surface craft could rarely make the Wewak coast owing to the efficient air and naval patrol. Any attempt of the enemy to concentrate aircraft on the coastal airfields was detected at once and drew attacks from R.A.A.F.

The 18th Army's position was already precarious and the Japanese showed their uneasiness by frantic attempts to break through the U.S. lines to the coast, which became more frequent as the pincers of the Allies' attack began to close.

The first serious attack on the U.S. cordon occurred on July 13, but the forward enemy units sent to force a gap were severely battered by U.S. artillery and U.S. and Australian aircraft, which also sank eight Japanese supply barges offshore. The Allied air force kept vigilant coastal patrol and scoured inland trails as well. For some time subsequently small parties of Japanese cut off from the rest were followed through swamp and bush and annihilated before they could rejoin the main army. Ten days later Japanese troops made a second effort to cross

Driniumor River; this was equally unsuccessful, many of the enemy falling into pits prepared by the Americans. Enemy casualties were estimated at 1,500 killed; units flung themselves madly against the U.S. lines and were mown down by the guns. During the first week of August the Japanese also failed in an attempt to turn the flank of the U.S. forces on the banks of Driniumor River; in a counter-attack a successful advance was made along the coast which sealed off more trails to the mountains.

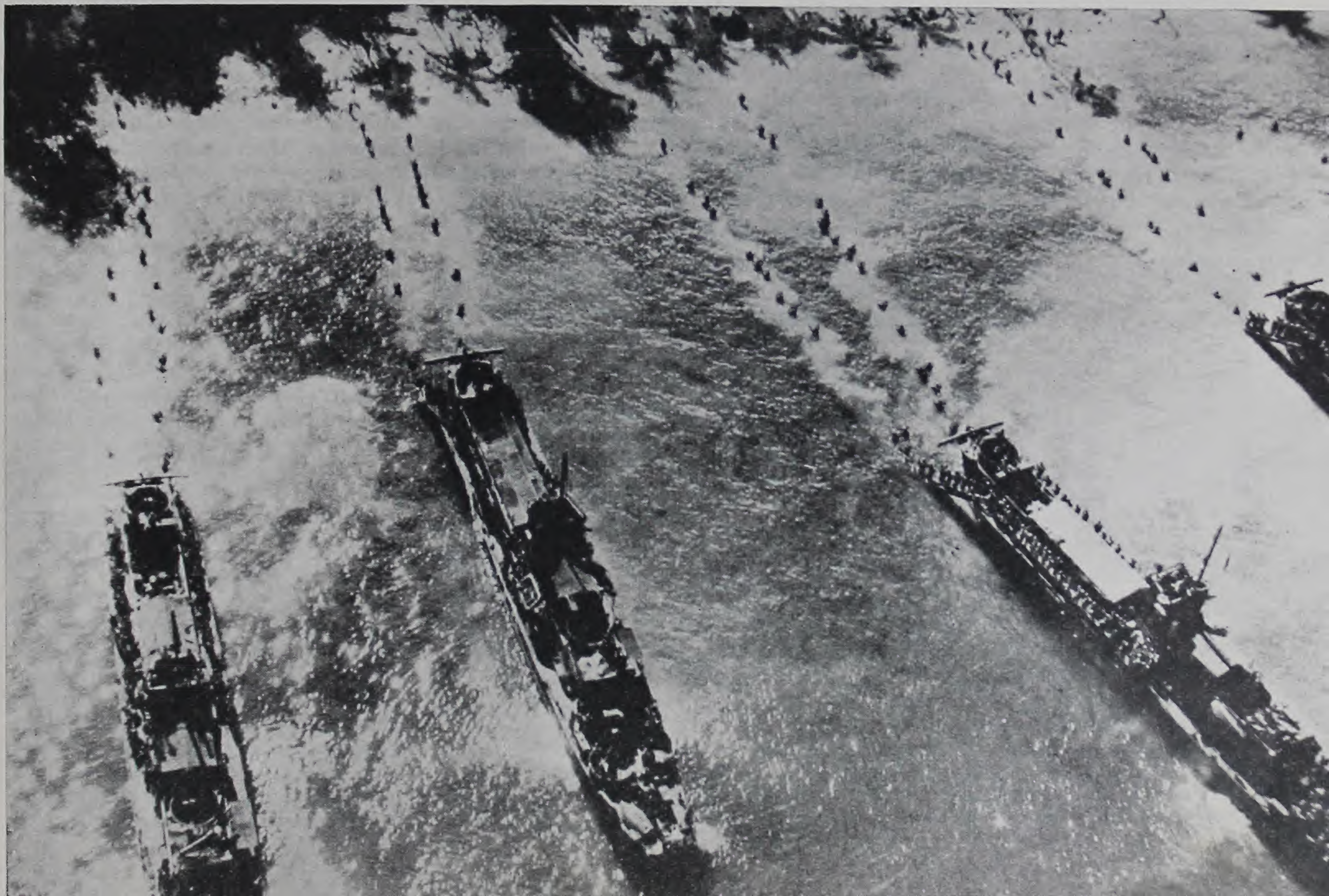
In November, the Australian 6th Infantry Division (veterans of Greece, Crete and Tobruk) commanded by Major-General H. C. H. Robertson, C.B.E., D.S.O., relieved American troops in the Aitape area and took over the Allied defence lines on the river. Heavy rains of the next three months slowed up activities, but in spite of this dogged progress was made.

In a broadcast on January 31, Mr. F. M. Forde, the Australian Army Minister said: "There is a tendency in some uninformed quarters to refer to

### **GENERAL MACARTHUR LANDS IN THE MOLUCCAS**

After an intensive air attack and naval bombardment lasting several days, U.S. forces under the personal command of General MacArthur landed in strength on Morotai Island in the Halmaheras (part of the Moluccas group) on September 14, 1945. They took the enemy completely by surprise and achieved their initial objectives with light losses. Here landing craft unload Marines and supplies at Red Beach, Morotai.

*Photo, U.S. Official*







### JAPANESE SURRENDER IN NEW GUINEA

The Australian 6th Division landed east of Wewak on May 13, 1945, and after fierce fighting captured the peninsula and airport. All Japanese forces in New Guinea surrendered at Wewak on September 13 to Major-General H. C. H. Robertson, commanding the 6th Division.

Above, Australian troops in the undergrowth after the initial landing.

Right, Japanese officers arrive by dinghy for the surrender.



the role of the Australian Army in New Britain, New Guinea and the Solomons as 'mopping-up.' This is completely misleading. 'Mopping-up' in the military sense implies the wiping out of unorganized remnants left in the wake of battle. The Japanese in these areas are not unorganized, nor are they remnants. They are aggressive fanatics organized in divisions and brigades, and will sell their lives dearly."

By the first week of February 1945 the enemy had found the plains in the Aitape area untenable. Some had

moved into the Torricelli mountain slopes. Others had been driven east along the coast.

The Australians captured the airfields of But and Dagua, both fiercely defended, by the end of March. On Dagua 32 damaged fighters and 19 medium bombers were found abandoned. All organized resistance in the area had ceased by April 17.

Maprik goldfield area, a hotly de-

fended position, fell on April 26. On May 13, troops of the 6th Division, under Major-General J. E. Stevens, supported by warships (among them the cruisers H.M.S. "Newfoundland" and H.M.A.S. "Hobart") made an amphibious landing a few miles east of Wewak, also threatened closely by other forces of the Division advancing from the west. After fierce fighting in which the Japanese had to be blasted out of pillboxes and dugouts in the natural caves of the limestone hills, the Australians captured Wewak peninsula and airfield on the 13th, Wewak village next day. The harbour was not taken until June 5, and even then the Japanese, in an absolutely hopeless position, fought desperately



### WEWAK DEFENCE AREA IN AUSTRALIAN NEW GUINEA

In the earlier phases of the Allied advance in New Guinea (see Chapter 309), the strongly defended harbour of Wewak was by-passed. A landing in the vicinity was made by the Australians on May 13, control of the harbour, however, not being secured until June 5. It was another six weeks before the mountains sheltering the site were cleared of the enemy.

for the ridges and tracks overlooking the port. They were cleared by attacks with flame-throwers and bayonets, the enemy retreating to other ridges behind as fast as they were dislodged until their retreat was cut off.

To the south, the Japanese 18th Army, now estimated at 10,000, out of a force originally 30,000 strong, was pinned against the Torricelli Mountains. Another enemy force was firmly entrenched in the tumbled crests of Prince Alexander Range, where each system of defence was repeated on higher ground, the pivots being Mount Tazaki, whose capture was announced on July 3, and Mount Shiburangu. The range was cleared by July 15, only after eight weeks' bitter fighting.

### Solomon Islands

In the late autumn of 1944, preparations began for operations to recover the two islands of the Solomons group remaining in enemy hands, Buka and Bougainville. There was already a strong Allied base on Bougainville, at Torokina north of Empress Augusta Bay, which had been held by U.S. marines and infantry since their landing in November 1943 (see page 2887).





### JUNGLE HAIR-CUT

Even while fighting in the jungle swamps of the Solomons, Australian troops managed to secure a brush-up and hair-cut. Here an Australian N.C.O. has 'a little bit off the top' at the self-styled 'Beauty Salon' on Bougainville. An Australian private acts as hairdresser. *Photo, Daily Mirror*

The New Zealand 3rd Division had seized Green Islands to the north-west on February 14, 1944 (see page 3089 and illus. in page 3091). The capture

**Importance of Green Islands** of this group assisted in completing the Allied ring round New Britain and New Ireland and disrupted all traffic between Rabaul and Kavieng and between Bougainville and Buka. Three months later the New Zealand division had handed over the group to U.S. forces and returned to their base at Bourail on New Caledonia. They were there joined by other forces from their forward base on Guadalcanal to await repatriation because New Zealand needed men for essential industries (see page 3453).

Green Islands, with a forward air base on Nissan, were valuable to the U.S. air force from which to bomb Japanese bases: Truk was being attacked by Fortresses a month after their occupation, and so was Rabaul.

When in November 1944 Australia assumed responsibility for activities in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands (see page 3453), their forces in the Solomons consisted of the 3rd Division under Major-General Bridgeford, C.B., O.B.E., M.C. and the 11th under Major-General K. W. Eather, C.B.E., D.S.O., E.D., forming the Australian II Corps commanded by Lieutenant-General S. G. Savage, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., E.D. The R.A.A.F. and

R.N.Z.A.F. made constant attacks on Japanese bases and supply lines and gave close support to the ground troops.

The U.S. force had made no advance from Torokina, but had fought continuously against fierce enemy attacks. The first Australian advance was to the south-west, to clear Japanese defences from an area of swamps and hills. By the end of January 1945, that district was rid of its last sniper and the main offensive opened. Three thrusts developed: (1) south-west across a low plain to occupy a fertile, cultivated area, which was the enemy's main source of supply of fresh food; (2) north from Torokina, first towards Buka Passage and then across to the north-east coast to isolate enemy bases on Soraken Point and Bonis Peninsula; (3) a direct thrust towards Numa Numa.

### Bougainville: South-west Sector

It was announced in Melbourne on January 25, 1945 that the low-lying country south of Empress Augusta Bay had been cleared, and Australian troops had taken the central stronghold of

Mawareka, advanced ten miles to the west of Puriata River and controlled 80 miles of waterfront and heights overlooking Numa Numa. By February 18 they were following a tributary, Hupai River, towards Mosigetta, an important junction of the main tracks. By this strategic move the enemy was contained in a triangular area between Gazelle Harbour and the headwaters of Puriata River. This area guarded the approach to the food producing area, and was held by numerous enemy posts each of which had to be destroyed in a separate engagement, usually with hand-to-hand fighting. The country provided natural defences—deep swamps and pathless mud flats. After four weeks of slow advance, the Australians captured Mosigetta, and the western side of the cultivated area had been gained. The nearer that this valuable food area was approached the more dense were the defences, including minefields. Fighting was of savage intensity. The enemy had no option but to retreat south-east when their route to the mouth of Puriata River was closed to them.



### TOROKINA SAW THE JAPANESE SURRENDER

The runways of the airfield at Torokina, on Bougainville Island in the Solomons, stretched along the shore. It was from Torokina that the Australians, taking over from the Americans in November 1944, and overcoming fierce enemy opposition, first began to secure control of the island. On September 8, 1945, all Japanese forces in Bougainville and the adjacent islands surrendered at Torokina to Lt.-General S. G. Savage, commanding the Australian II Corps.





#### ON THE PURIATA RIVER

Australian-manned Matilda tanks being dragged by engineers using bulldozers across the Puriata River, on Bougainville Island in the Solomons, during the fighting in April-May 1945. Right, Australian sappers building a panel bridge over the Puriata which lay on the main supply route to troops in the Hongorai River district.

*Photos, Australian Official*

Abnormal rains towards the end of the monsoon period in March, which put whole districts under water, and high seas,

which caused creeks

Japanese to overflow so that only the heaviest landing craft could make the south-west coast, slowed down the Australian advance. Early in April a considerable number of Japanese troops managed to infiltrate the Australian lines, but although they cut off some units for a time, they did not succeed in forcing a general withdrawal, and were estimated to have lost 500-600 killed, the greatest number of casualties in any single engagement in this theatre of war. Fighting died down by April 8 and the Australian position was then consolidated before the Allied offensive began in great strength against the Hongorai River defences. Observer planes directed concentrated artillery attacks, and enemy transport and troops were bombed without intermission. The weather continued unfavourable and violent thunderstorms interfered with communications; nevertheless, signallers and engineers, working on repairs in heavy rain and gales, maintained the services. Where trails were unfit for trucks, Papuan carriers waded to the forward lines with stores and ammunition.



One such convoy was ambushed, and promptly "went bush" while its escort wiped out the enemy.

One Australian thrust was made across Puriata River on a 360-ft. bridge, similar to a Bailey Bridge. It was assembled on the bank, rolled into position by tractors, and it carried 32-ton loads. By May 19 all Hongorai River crossing defences were neutralized, and the infantry was attacking strong defences obstructing the road to Buin. Infiltrations still occurred, however, even at the end of July. At the time of the official Japanese surrender, one base only remained in this sector.

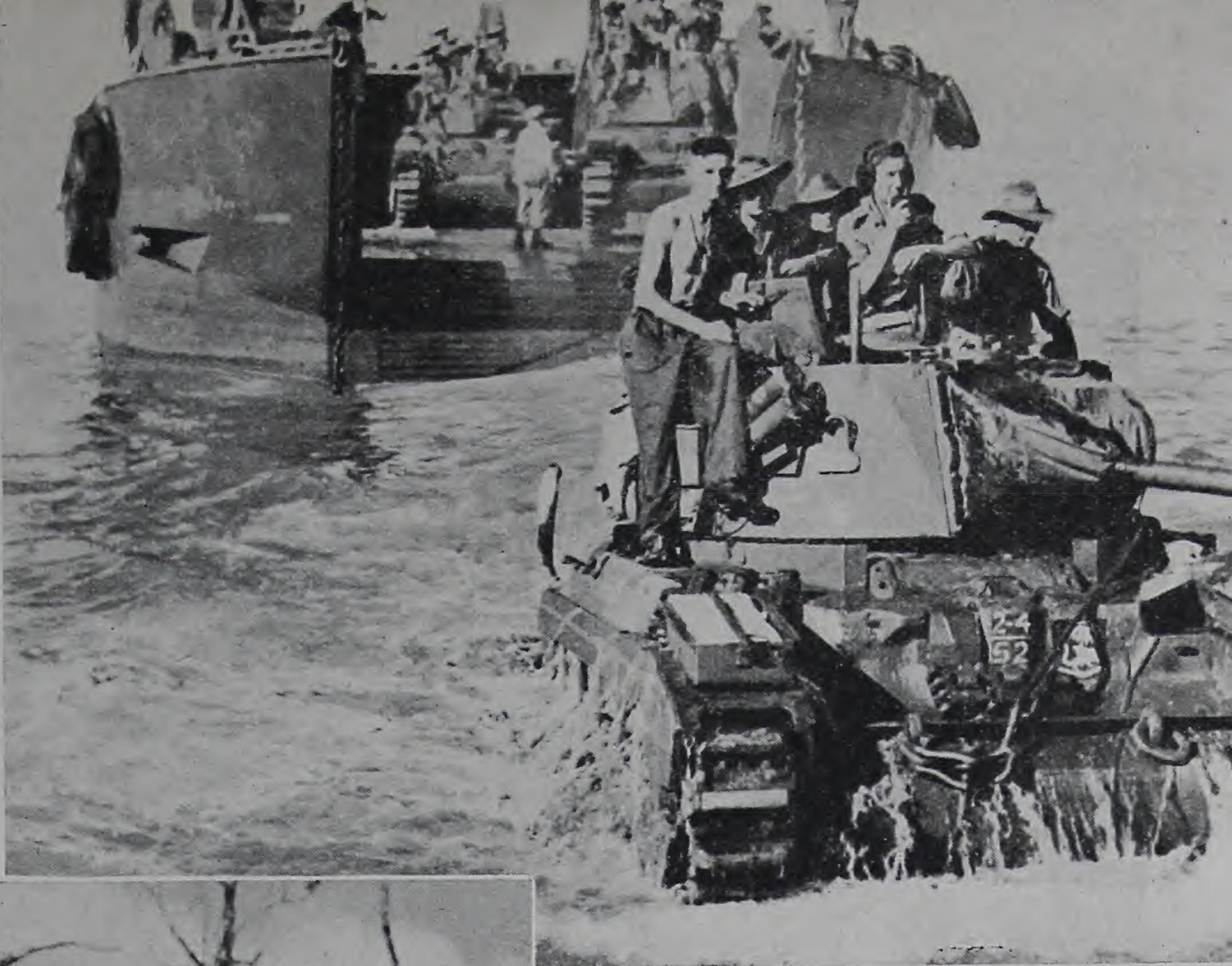
#### Bougainville: Northern Sector

Operations in the north against the Buka area were under the personal direction of the Corps Commander, Lieutenant-General Savage.



On February 2, 1945, it was announced that a thrust of 40 miles had been made up the west coast from Torokina without any serious opposition. The advance continued until Downs Ridge was reached whose lower spurs dominated the right flank of the Australian force. These heights were strongly held by the enemy and the ridge was not cleared until March 4. Advance then became more rapid, and by the end of the month the enemy base and airfields of Soraken peninsula were under attack by two forces moving up the east and west coasts of the peninsula. The Australian positions were shelled, but a devastating fire from 25-pounders in close operation with the air force silenced the enemy, whose A.A. fire was accurate but who lacked aircraft.

Penned in the northern half of the peninsula the enemy found his base



#### ON BOUGAINVILLE

On February 2, 1945, an Australian force was 12 miles north-east of Torokina, advancing in the direction of the Japanese base at Numa Numa on the east coast through a series of fortified ridges defended with mounting violence. Here, Australian-manned Matilda tanks land at Toko Beach, Bougainville. Left, mortar crew outside a dug-out near Numa Numa.

*Photos, Australian Official*



neutralized, and by the middle of May the Australian advance eastward had overrun Pora Pora and occupied Ratsua, the terminus of an important road to Ruri Bay on the east coast. From Ratsua the Japanese used punts to carry stores up a river to their inland forces. A number of punts at Ratsua jetty were captured, together with much valuable equipment, vehicles, tanks, weapons, ammunition and stores.

A second important Japanese base was cut off on Bonis Peninsula and a cordon drawn right across the northern point of Bougainville, out of which the enemy tried in vain to break. The arrival of the Australians at Ruri Bay was announced on May 20.

#### Bougainville: Central Sector

About the same time as the advance north began, another force struck across the centre north-eastward from Torokina towards the Numa Numa, Japanese base on the opposite coast. This involved the storming of a series of fortified ranges, spurs of the central mountain complexes. Each slope had to be cleared, each ridge pounded by artillery and aircraft until it could be carried by assault. By the end of March, Smith's Hill and Hunt Hill, commanding the Numa Numa trail, were occupied.



り親て人下  
 十上切國るはの  
 最べ官に際者抵英  
 と高しの扱視た抗文  
 る速指聯所ひにりきは  
 てもて揮合にも基よ止こ  
 すの居官軍致よきりめの

The Japanese with this message has ceased resistance. He should be treated well in accordance with international law. Take him to the nearest Commanding Officer.

C. C. ALLIED FORCES



2

### SOLOMONS SURRENDER

1. Leaflet dropped among enemy lines on Bougainville on August 15, 1945, telling isolated Japanese troops of their Government's capitulation. 2. First contact between Japanese peace envoys and Australians on the Mivo River, Bougainville. 3. At Torokina, Lieutenant-General S. G. Savage signs the surrender document. Before him sit Lieutenant-General Kanda and Vice-Admiral Samijima, whose swords lie on the table.

*Photos, Australian Official; Associated Press*

self-supporting as they had a very large fertile area under cultivation.

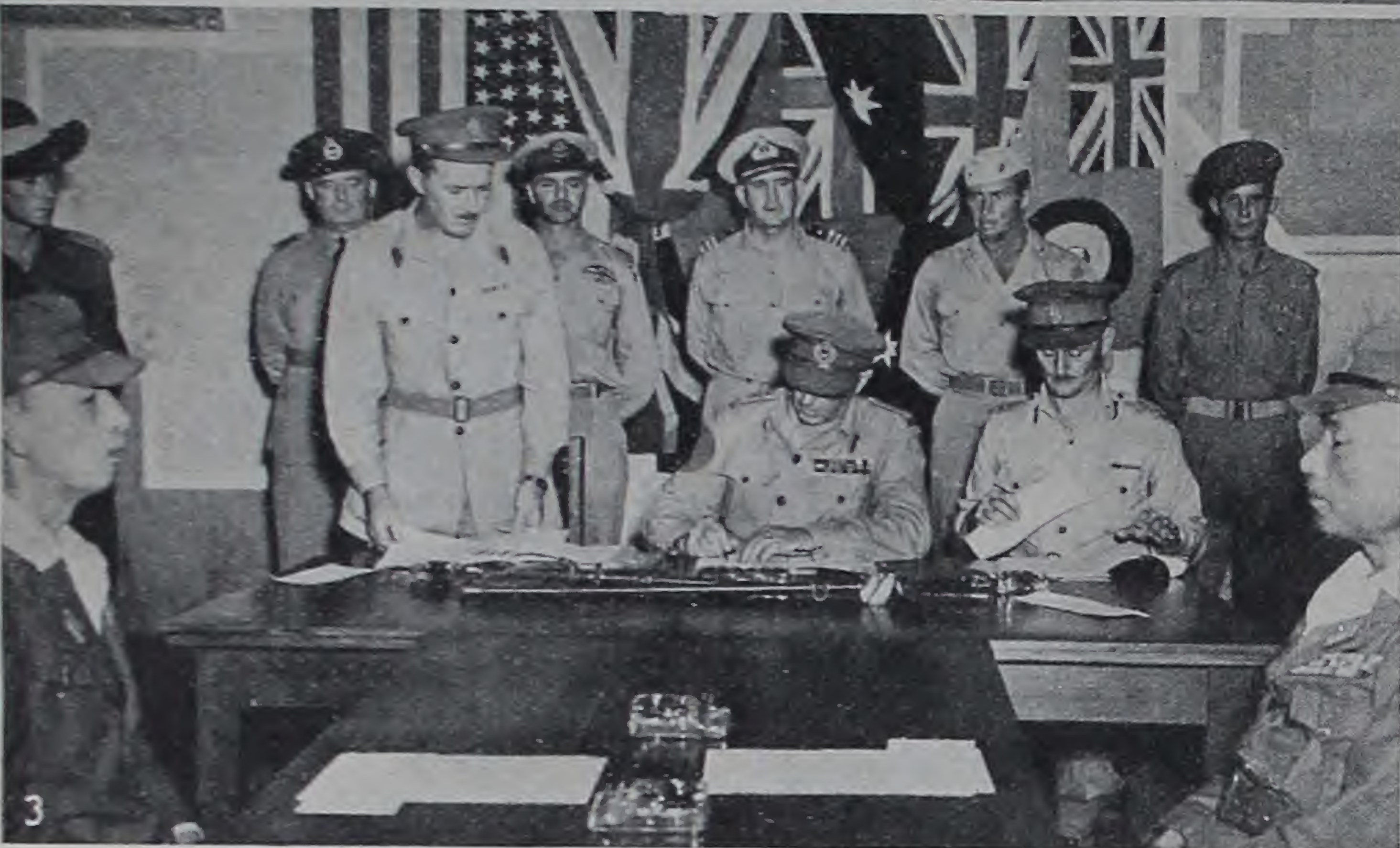
The Australian objective involved a series of minor actions to clear large plantations, to destroy enemy positions on river banks, in native villages, and in small inlets of the two large bays; and after the shores of these had been secured, there were still fortified areas inland to be broken up.

By the end of March, Tol and Waitavalo plantations keys to the southern entrance to Gazelle Peninsula, had been captured. In April Wide Bay was occupied after the destruction of a very strong enemy force. In the following two months, the Japanese withdrew slowly north.

All these actions, though they received small attention, entailed unrelenting fighting, and vigorous patrol work never ceased. The Australians were numerically at a disadvantage: as elsewhere in this island campaign they fought at a ratio

**One Australian  
 Against Five  
 Japanese**

of one Australian against every five of the enemy. But the absence of Japanese air observation and the refusal of the natives to collaborate with the enemy unless forced into slavery were factors favourable to the Australians. The enemy garrison in New Britain at



3

The Australians were then two-thirds of the distance across the island, but the nearer they approached the base the more violent became the fighting. One patrol on April 21 made a deep penetration of the enemy defences, reaching the Numa Numa plantations and returning with valuable information.

Berry Hill, a very strongly fortified peak, after being blasted from the air, was captured on May 19. In a series of

**Japanese  
 Headquarters  
 Overrun**

arduous engagements, the Australians regained dominating features of the country surrounding

the Numa Numa trail, and the Japanese were driven from their headquarters near Wearn's Hill by the end of July.

Though the full number of Japanese casualties on Bougainville after the Australians relieved the Americans is not known, 14,460 dead were counted; only 434 prisoners were taken. A high percentage of deaths was probably due to sickness. When the Japanese commander in the Solomons, Lieutenant-General Kanda, began formal surrender negotiations on August 19, he disclosed that there were still 20,000 Japanese on Bougainville, and another

1,000 in nearby islands. In a message to the 3rd Infantry Division, Lieutenant-General Sturdee, Commander of the Australian 1st Army, said: "Your campaign in the last ten months has been strenuous, dogged and continuous. It has been an honour to command such magnificent troops."

### New Britain

By mid-April, 1944, the Australian 5th Division with U.S. forces had regained control of all except the northern end of New Britain (see page 3117 and map in page 3124). The same Australian division, commanded by Major-General Ramsay, C.B.E., D.S.O., relieved the U.S. troops there, as Australians had done elsewhere, in November 1944, and from that date until the final surrender offensive operations were directed towards regaining all enemy held areas south of Gazelle Peninsula. A broad, fully fortified defence zone extending from Wide Bay to Open Bay prevented the Japanese from escaping by land, and escape by sea or air was also out of the question; but it was known that they were very well equipped and armed, and had sufficient stores to last for a long period; they were moreover





#### AUSTRALIANS INVADE THE OIL ISLAND OF TARAKAN

Troops of the Australian 9th Division landed in force on the island of Tarakan, off the N.E. coast of Dutch Borneo, and one of the world's richest oil-fields, on May 1, 1945. The landings were preceded by a shattering bombardment of enemy installations by U.S. and Australian warships and heavy attacks by Australian and U.S. Liberators. For three days and nights the invasion fleet sailed through enemy waters and reached Tarakan without interference. Here Australians move inshore towards burning oil tanks fired by the enemy.

*Photo, Associated Press*





#### NEW ZEALANDERS LAND ON GREEN ISLANDS

Under strong naval and air protection, New Zealand forces landed on February 14, 1944, on the Green Islands, off Buka, at the north end of the Solomons, and occupied them against almost negligible enemy opposition and weak air interference. These landings completed the series of flank movements begun in the New Georgia group. 'For all strategic military purposes,' declared General MacArthur, 'this concludes the campaign for the Solomons.' Here, human chains, formed by New Zealand troops, unload supplies.

*Photo, U.S. Navy*









#### AUSTRALIANS SECURE ENEMY FUEL-SOURCE IN BORNEO

*Photo, Australian Official*

Before the Balikpapan landings on July 1, 1945, 'heavies' of the U.S.A.A.F and the R.A.A.F. pounded Japanese defences for 15 days. Balikpapan, with an annual production of 15,000,000 barrels, had been restored by the Japanese to become their main source of oil and aviation spirit. General MacArthur, who accompanied the landing force, declared, 'Our shipping can now, with land-based cover, go to any point in the S.-W. Pacific.' Here a mortar crew of the 7th Division is in action near Vasey Highway, named in memory of Major-General Vasey (see pages 3113 and 3123).





the time of the surrender was estimated at 55,000, and the 100,000 Japanese who surrendered on Gazelle Peninsula included civilians brought to settle on the land and 200 Japanese women.

#### Borneo

At the end of April 1945, Australian forces, after a prolonged period of special training, sailed from their base on Morotai to begin operations for the recovery of Borneo. The very large convoy under cover of an Allied air force passed for three days through enemy waters unhindered.

On May 1 an almost unopposed landing was made on the oil-bearing island of Tarakan off north-east Dutch Borneo, after an extremely severe bombardment by Allied naval and air forces which destroyed the enemy shore defences. The land force belonged to the famous Australian 9th Division, some members of which were veterans of the Middle East campaign and had also fought in New Guinea.

Major-General George Wootten, commander of the 9th Division, had the general direction of the attack, in collaboration with Admiral Royal of the U.S. Navy and Air Vice-Marshal Bostock of the R.A.A.F. The assault forces were under Brigadier D. A. Whitehead. Lieutenant-General Sir

#### SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC COMBAT AREA

In November 1944, Australian ground forces took over from the Americans all operations in the Solomon Islands and in New Guinea. During 1945, Australian troops made landings in Borneo and reconquered a large part of that important island. This map gives an idea of the immense area covered in these operations. The map inset illustrates the Australian campaign (described in this chapter) which led to the clearing of Bougainville.

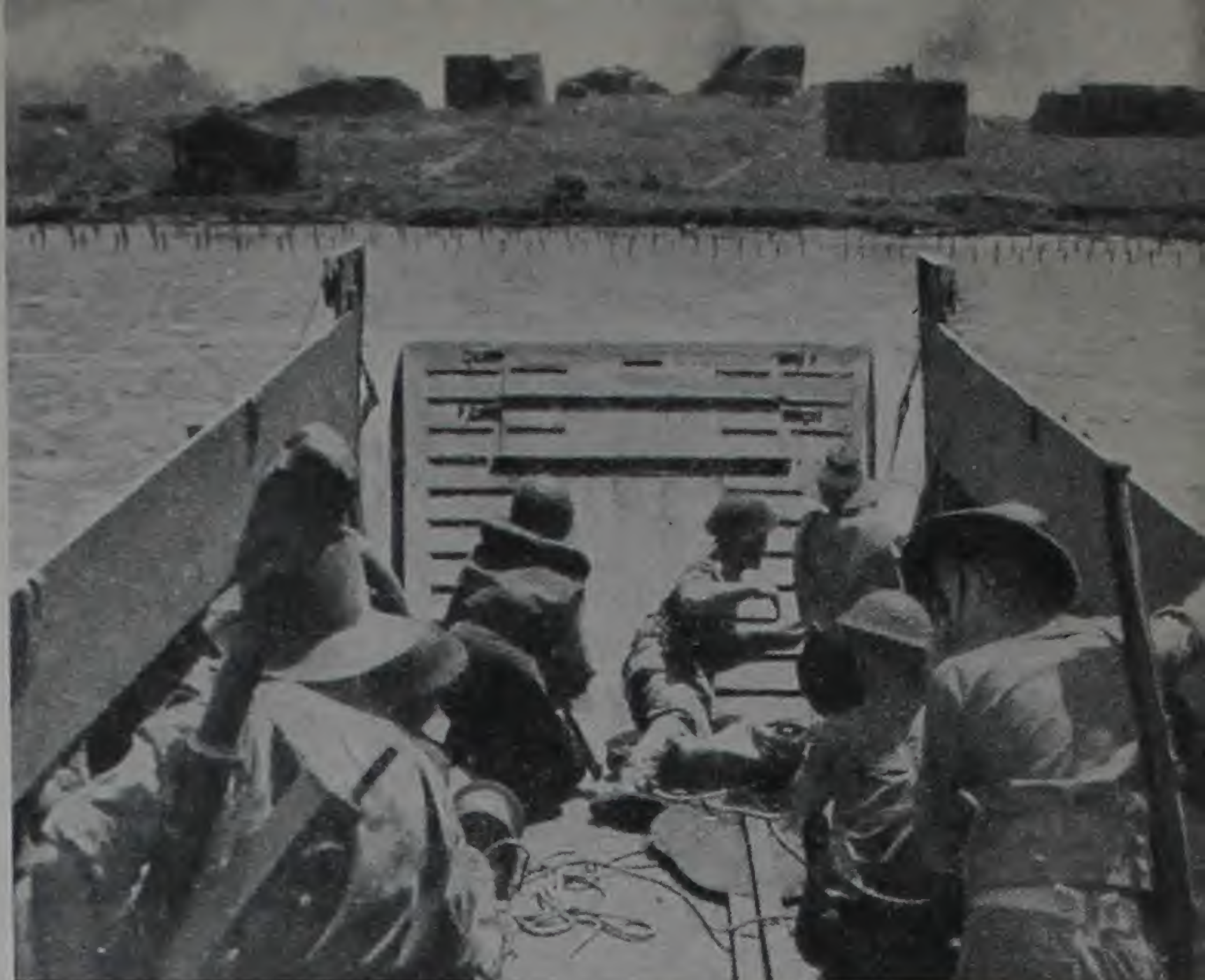


#### AUSTRALIAN PATROL IN NEW BRITAIN

This patrol on the island of New Britain (see map in page 3124) consisted of eight Australian infantrymen, accompanied by three native police boys and a dozen native carriers. It is shown moving along the forest-fringed beach in the Jacquinot Bay area on the south side of the island. First Allied landing on New Britain was made by U.S. troops in December 1943. Australian forces took over in November 1944.

*Photo, Australian Official*





### AUSTRALIAN COMMANDO FORCE LANDS ON SADOE

In preparation for the Australian 9th Division's full-scale invasion of Tarakan, Borneo, on May 1, 1945, an Australian Commando force landed on the nearby small island of Sadoe the previous day, and set up a gun-battery. Left, an Allied aircraft lays a smoke-screen to cover the landing. Right, U.S. landing-craft, with Australian troops on board, nears the shore at Sadoe.

*Photos, Keystone*



Leslie Morshead, the senior Australian commander, was Corps commander in the field, and the forces engaged included Dutch troops. An Australian Commando had landed the previous day on the islet of Sadoe, between Tarakan and the Borneo mainland, and set up a gun-battery to cover the assault troops as they went ashore on Tarakan. At the same time Royal Australian Engineers cleared the Tarakan beaches of explosive, steel and barbed wire defences.

During the landing itself, a Naval Commando, engaged for the first time after intensive training, marked out beach areas, marshalled the landing craft, gathered information about tidal movements, and controlled much of the beach activity (compare with Beach

Groups, see page 3150). The only resistance came from low ridges on the left flank where limestone crags concealed 20-mm. guns which could be wheeled back into tunnels. These positions were shelled by naval guns.

The port and oilfields were strongly fortified and fiercely defended. There was a week of strenuous fighting before Tarakan Hill, enemy strongpoint in the centre of the town, was captured on May 7. The airfield had been taken the day before. The R.A.A.F. was operating from it by the 8th.

**Tarakan  
Hill Falls**

Near the town of Tarakan good roads aided rapid advance, but beyond this the swamp and jungle country was heavily mined, and with series of

### THE INVASION OF BORNEO BEGINS

1. General Sir Thomas Blamey, Australian C.-in.-C. (right), and Lieutenant-General Sir Leslie Morshead, commanding the Australian 2nd Army, inspect troops and assault craft all set for the invasion of Borneo on May 1, 1945. 2. U.S. rocket-firing, troop-carrying craft cover the Australian landings at Tarakan as smoke billows from burning oil installations ashore. 3. Matilda tank moves along the beach.

*Photos, Australian and U.S. Official*







### ' MIXED-GRILL ' BARRAGE AT TARAKAN

This gun-site on the Borneo island of Tarakan, only 600 yards from the enemy lines, was known to Australian troops, who landed there on May 1, 1945, as 'H.M.A.S. Margy.' Nearest the camera is a 25-pounder; next a 3.7 A.A. gun used as a field artillery piece, while beyond them a Matilda tank joins in. Right, wreckage left by the retreating enemy in a Tarakan oil-field.

*Photos, Australian Official: Fox*

fortified razorbacks each of which had to be taken by assault. Full control of Tarakan was secured by June 24.

The Japanese garrison was found to be well fed and fully equipped, but the Chinese and half-caste population who met the forward troops even while fighting was in progress were emaciated

#### Civilian Conditions on Tarakan

and in dire need of medical attention. More than 6,000 were tended at a Dutch administrative centre behind the lines. Thousands of native houses had been deliberately fired by the Japanese because their owners showed pleasure at the approach of the liberating forces.

A combined operation in still greater strength was carried out on June 10 by the Australian 9th Division in the

important oilfield area of British North Borneo. Landings were made on Labuan Island, on Maura (in Brunei Bay), and at Brooketon. Lieutenant-General Morshead went ashore with the assault force. The U.S.A. 13th A.F. and the R.A.A.F. gave air cover. Again no air opposition was encountered.

By June 13, Brunei town and airstrip were under Allied control. Labuan Island was virtually cleared by the 16th. Three days later, the Australians reached Tutong, an oil centre 35 miles south-west of Brunei, meeting little opposition on the way. On June 20 new unopposed landings were made on the coast of Sarawak at Lutong, refinery centre for the Seria and Miri oilfields, and some 85 miles north-east of Brunei. By the 24th the Seria oilfields had been

### ALLIED LANDINGS ON LABUAN ISLAND

Troops of the Australian 9th Division went ashore in great strength on June 10, 1945, at Labuan Island, off British North Borneo, without loss. The landings, supported by units of the U.S. and Royal Australian Navy, were led by General MacArthur and Lieutenant-General Sir Leslie Morshead. Below, left, evacuating wounded to the hospital ships; right, Australian troops in action at Labuan airstrip.

*Photos, Australian Official; Acme Pictures*







### CAPTURE OF BORNEO'S GREATEST OIL-CENTRE

Supported by over 300 warships of the U.S. 7th Fleet, the Royal Australian Navy and the Royal Netherlands Navy, troops of the Australian 7th Division landed near Balikpapan, Borneo's richest oil-source, on July 1, 1945. Three days later the town itself fell. Above, troops sort out supplies. Below, Australian artillery signallers use a captured enemy tricycle to lay lines.

*Photos, Australian Official; Paul Popper*

captured: the Japanese had fired the fifty wells, some of which were still burning, and destroyed the township before evacuating them. Miri was taken next day: the oilfield, like that at Seria, had been fired.

On July 1 a surprise landing was made at Balikpapan, one of the richest oil producing centres in the Dutch East Indies. Following a heavy naval and air bombardment, the Australian 7th Division (which turned the tide at Kokoda, New Guinea, in 1942—see page 2470), commanded by Major-General E. H. Milford, D.S.O., went ashore. General MacArthur landed with them. After securing a beach-head, the Australians advanced inland in spite of fierce resistance. U.S. heavy, medium and fighter aircraft gave strong support, blasting the ground ahead of the troops. Sepinggan airfield was captured on the 3rd. Balikpapan itself, reduced to ruins by Allied bombing and shelling and oil fires, fell on the 4th. Australian troops then crossed the bay and occupied the anti-aircraft site at Penadjam on the headland of the west entrance.

Resistance stiffened and the Japanese attempted to infiltrate the advance lines and reoccupy their gun positions but were beaten back. Manggar airfield, ten miles to the east, was captured, and the Allied fleet shelled enemy inland positions and escaping units on the coastal road. Advancing from Manggar, one Australian force pressed inland and took the enemy coastal defences on Macassar Strait from the rear, completely annihilating them. North and west of Balikpapan, Dutch



East Indian troops pushed inland. Another landing, unopposed, on the west arm of Balikpapan Bay brought that valuable anchorage under complete Allied control by the 11th. The fighting continued severe, until the carefully built-up defence centre of Mount Batochampar was won on July 15. Sambodja, an oil centre, was occupied without resistance on the 18th.

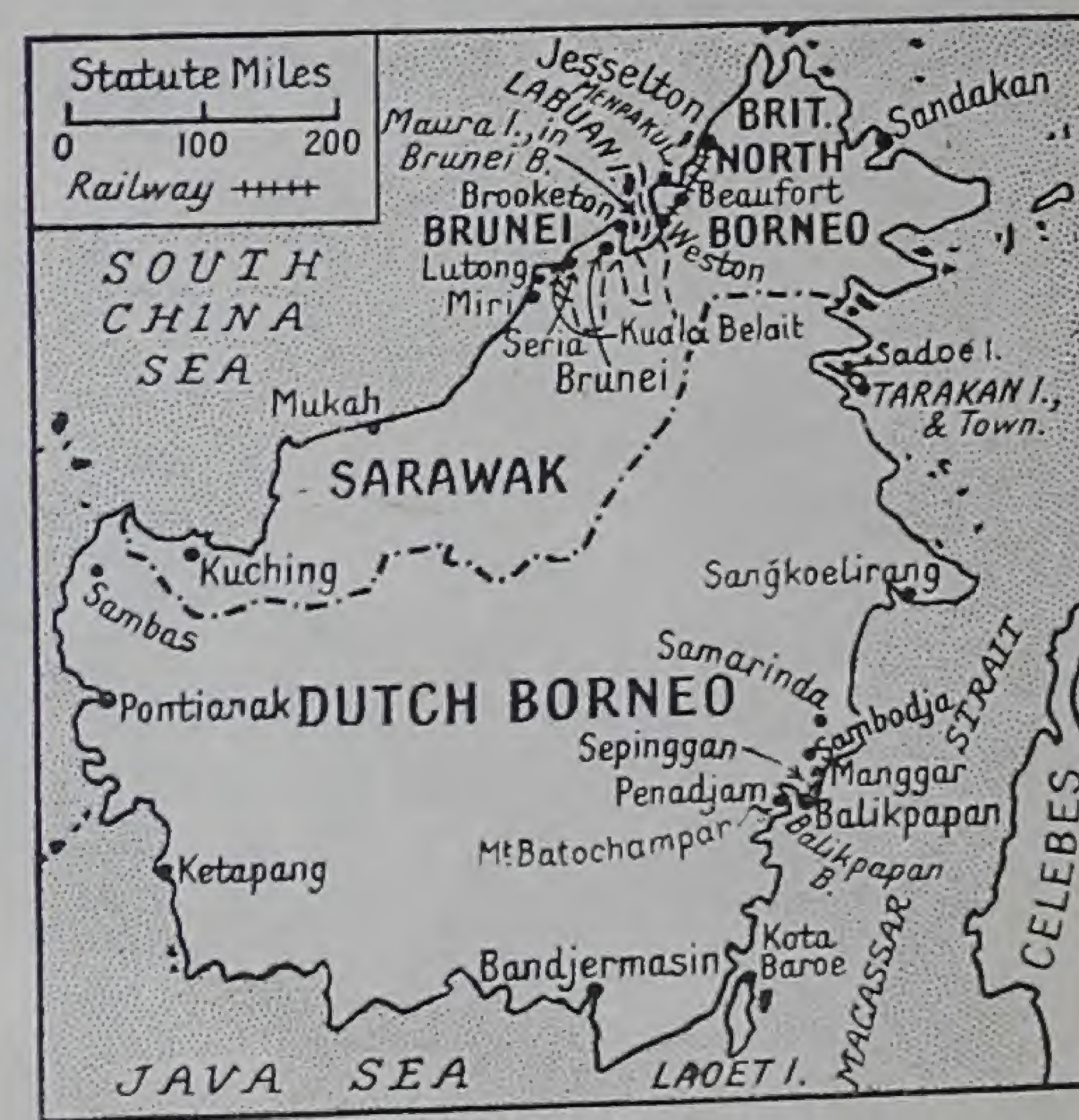
Operations in all sectors at Borneo were continuing when the unconditional surrender of Japan came on August 14. Although large Japanese forces remained in the south-west Pacific, they were by then powerless to take the offensive.

Hostilities ceased following the Emperor's rescript of August 16, and the first formal acknowledgment of defeat came from Lieutenant-General Kanda's headquarters on August 19 (see page 3594); but it was not till September 6, 1945, that the surrender in the south-west Pacific was signed in St. George's Channel, 28 miles south-east of Rabaul, on board the aircraft-carrier H.M.S. "Glory," where Lieutenant-General V. A. H. Sturdee, commanding the Australian 1st Army, personally received the surrender of General Imamura, Japanese C-in-C., South-West Pacific, Admiral Kusaka, and all forces under their command.

Local surrenders followed. Japanese forces in Dutch Borneo were surrendered by Admiral Kimada to Major-General E. H. Milford, commanding the Australian 7th Division, on board the frigate H.M.A.S. "Burdekin" on September 8; Japanese forces on Bougainville and the adjacent Solomon Islands by Lieutenant-General Kanda, commanding the Japanese 17th Army, and Vice-Admiral Samemija to Lieutenant-General S. G. Savige, commanding the Australian II Corps, at Torokina on September 8; Japanese forces in British North Borneo by Lieutenant-General Baba to Major-General G. F. Wootten, commanding the Australian 9th Division, at Labuan on September 10; Japanese forces in New Guinea by Lieutenant-General Adachi, commanding the Japanese 18th Army, to Major-General H. C. H. Robertson, commanding the Australian 6th Division, at Wewak on September 13.

### LANDINGS ON BORNEO

The Pacific island of Borneo, scene, in 1945, of a brilliant Australian campaign. Landings were made at Sadoe, off Tarakan, on April 30; at Labuan (June 10); and at Balikpapan (July 1). The area of Borneo is 284,000 square miles. Politically the island is divided into: British North Borneo, Sarawak, Dutch Borneo, and Brunei, a Mahomedan state.





## BRITISH COLONIAL RECORD, 1945

*To the end of the war, the contributions of the British Colonies continued to be of both military and economic importance to the Allies. African troops played a striking part in the Burma campaign, smaller contingents from other Colonies fought in Europe and the Far East, and Colonial products remained indispensable. In this concluding chapter on the war effort of the British Colonies, Sir John Shuckburgh indicates the future that lies before them*

**D**URING the final stages of the war, Colonial Military Forces served in the main in the Far Eastern Theatre. The African troops in Burma (see Chapters 345 and 371) continued the excellent work they had accomplished in previous years. During the early months of 1945 the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Duke of Devonshire) paid a visit of inspection to the West and East African units in India and Burma. On his return to England, he recounted his experiences in a speech delivered in the House of Lords on April 15. He had seen a number of African combatant units, including the 11th East African Division, the 22nd East African Brigade and the 81st and 82nd West African Divisions, and everywhere he was impressed by the smartness of the African soldiers, sometimes under very difficult conditions, by their keenness in drill and in turning out a guard. But the Africans were no mere "parade ground soldiers." East and West Africans, many of them drawn from "non-warrior" races, had been campaigning in most difficult country and under most arduous conditions. In the Kabaw Valley (see page 3531) the East Africans had to man-handle their motor transport for long distances through deep mud and torrential rain. West Africans had, at one stage, to spend six weeks cutting a track through dense jungle to enable their transport to be used at all. On the only occasion on which the Duke saw West Africans actually in action against the enemy, he was full of admiration for their high spirits and absolute steadiness. The morale of these troops was very high and their health was excellent.

The Duke visited a number of field hospitals, which he found efficient and well supplied with medical requisites;

**Good Work by African Troops** "a wonderfully cheerful and uncomplaining patient and immensely

courageous in the endurance of pain."

Before the war, said the Duke, the bulk of the African Forces were infantry soldiers armed with rifles only; there were only a few other units in West Africa and still fewer in East Africa.

During the war the Africans had expanded into complete divisions of all arms. They had learnt the use of complicated modern weapons from Bren guns to howitzers. They had become signallers, armourers, drivers, mechanics, cooks, bakers, military police, nursing orderlies and dispensers. They had proved themselves capable of carrying out, with comparatively little European supervision, the whole process of overhauling the armament of a division after a "very long and difficult campaign in unending mud and rain." Another duty in which Africans had proved especially efficient was that of intercepting Japanese wireless messages.

"It was to me," said the Duke in conclusion, "a most remarkable and moving experience to see this great volunteer army. Many of the men in this army have given up good positions at home; many of them were civil servants. It was a moving experience to see them serving on the other side of

the world, and to know that they had proved the masters of a very highly skilled military race. I was deeply touched by the fact that men who, all through those monsoon campaigns, had been able to keep nothing else dry, had kept their photograph of the King dry, and kept it as a treasured possession."

In the operations that marked the closing stages of the Burma campaign, the fine record of the African troops was fully maintained (see Chapter 345). The 81st **Battles in** West African Division **Burma** was engaged in hard fighting at Kyauktaw (Arakan) early in January 1945. Later in the month it captured Nyohaung and was there relieved by the 82nd West African Division which had arrived in India from West Africa in the previous year. The 81st Division's advance of some 150 miles greatly assisted the operations directed against Akyab. The 82nd Division continued the advance,



## TRIBESMAN'S TROPHY

Record of the African troops was fully upheld in Burma during 1945. At Norak, Kenya, Masai tribesmen gathered to inspect a Japanese officer's sword captured in single and mortal combat in Burma by a Masai Askari of the King's African Rifles. Brought back by Lieut.-General Sir Kenneth Anderson, G.O.C., East Africa Command, it is shown to the Chief and brothers of the brave Askari by a N.C.O. of the Kenya Police.





### MALTA RISES AGAIN

Early in 1945 the task was begun of restoring some of the more notable buildings in Malta which had been badly damaged in the George Cross island's 3,215 alerts. Here restoration is in progress at the Church of St. Augustine, Valetta. The stone is brought in by mule from quarries seven miles away. *Photo, Topical*

constantly harassing the flanks and rear of Japanese troops who were attempting to deal with landings on the coast. The additional East African Brigades sent over in 1944 also saw active service before the end of the campaign. One Brigade was used in amphibious operations for the capture of Ramree island; the other operated for a time west of the Chindwin. (For 11th East African and

### ASKARI AWARD

Colour-Sergeant Walisema Abdul Feraj, a veteran Sudanese Askari who had served with the East African forces for over 25 years, received from Major-General E. B. B. Hawkins, D.S.O., G.O.C., Southern Area, the long-service medal at the settlement for discharged Sudanese soldiers near Nairobi in August 1945. It was the Colour-Sergeant's eighth decoration. *Photo, British Official*



81st and 82nd West African Divisional signs, *see* colour plate following page 3938.)

Every preparation was made, on the termination of hostilities in Burma, for a fresh campaign on a grand scale for the reoccupation of Malaya and Singapore. In the event no such campaign proved necessary. The surrender of Japan on August 14 brought to an end the long ordeal of Hongkong, Malaya and other British territories in the Far East. Reoccupation was effected by peaceful means and with the co-operation of the Japanese Government. In agreement with the Chinese and the United States Governments the first units of the British Pacific Fleet entered the harbour of Hongkong on August 30 and took possession of the naval dockyards after a sharp but brief encounter with Japanese "suicide" detachments. On September 5 British, Indian and Gurkha troops landed at the port of Singapore and effected a peaceful entry without untoward incident. By the end of the day the whole island was under British control.

"The return to Singapore," wrote "The Times" correspondent, "was quite extraordinary. The landing had been planned as a carefully phased military operation, so that if the Japanese offered any resistance we should be able to cope with it. But it was like a civic reception." General Itagaki, commanding the Japanese 7th Army in Malaya, Java, and Sumatra, and other Japanese officers met the British troops as they came ashore at 11.30 a.m. "There were also interpreters and guides with white armbands to lead our troops to their objectives. Many staff cars were waiting, and 500 vehicles had been assembled near the cathedral for our use. The Japanese had allowed few people to enter the dock area, but some Chinese were there, cheering and shouting. Four Roman Catholic missionaries, Christian brothers, two Irish and two French, had been allowed in and were overjoyed at our return."

To the vast majority of the people of Malaya release from the Japanese yoke and a return to their old allegiance were entirely welcome. But there was a widespread demand, not confined to Malaya, for some early pronouncement as to future British policy in the country. The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. George Hall), in a written reply of October 10, made a full statement on the subject to the House of Commons. He laid emphasis on "the need to promote a sense of unity and common citizenship which will develop the country's strength and capacity in due course for self-government within the

British Commonwealth." With this object in view, he said, the Government proposed to create a constitutional Union of Malaya "consisting of the nine states in the Malay Peninsula and the two British settlements of Penang and Malacca." Singapore itself would in the first instance be constituted as a separate Colony. Its ultimate incorporation in the Malayan Union would be a matter for later consideration. The peoples of Penang and Malacca would lose none of their rights as British subjects on entering the Union; but a Malayan Union citizenship would also be created, for which the qualifications would be birth in Malaya or a suitable period of residence there. It would be necessary to conclude fresh agreements with the various Malayan rulers, for which purpose Sir Harold MacMichael (formerly High Commissioner for Palestine) had been sent to Malaya on a special mission. (The controversy that arose over these proposals belongs to the year 1946.)

In his concluding words, Mr. Hall laid emphasis on the right of the Malayan people to be assured of their full share in the rewards of their industry and to feel their country's wealth reflected in their own standard of life.

**Rights of the  
Malayan  
People**

In the European theatre Colonial Units continued, during the last months of the war, to render useful service. Cypriot Transport Companies remained on active duty in Italy and elsewhere in the Mediterranean area until the termination of hostilities. The Jewish Brigade group from Palestine (*see* page 3060) fought in the Italian campaign from March to May 1945. It spent about six weeks in the front line and incurred some 200 casualties. Its services won the commendation of Field-Marshal Alexander. The Mauritius Pioneers reached a strength of nearly 3,000 by May 1945; they served, at different times, in the Middle East, Malta, Sicily and Italy. Seychelles Pioneers also served overseas.

Arrangements were made in the spring of 1945 to employ the 1st Battalion, Caribbean Regiment (which had arrived from the West Indies in July 1944), on active service in Italy; but German resistance collapsed before the plan could be put into effect. West Indians in the R.A.F. again rendered a good account of themselves. A twenty-year-old Jamaican air-gunner (Flight-Sergeant J. M. Hall) was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal for an outstanding feat of coolness and courage in taking over control of a badly damaged bomber from his wounded pilot





## SURRENDER AT HONGKONG

On August 30, 1945, a powerful British naval force, commanded by Rear-Admiral Cecil H. J. Harcourt, C.B., entered the harbour of Hongkong. Fifteen days later the formal surrender was made at Government House to Admiral Harcourt by Major-General Okada and Vice-Admiral Fujita in the presence of Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, C.-in-C. British Pacific Fleet, and of United States, Chinese and Canadian representatives. 1. The cruiser H.M.S. 'Swiftsure,' flying Rear-Admiral Harcourt's flag, heads the British warships entering Hongkong harbour. 2. Guarded by Royal Marines, a Japanese envoy walks down the flight-deck of H.M.S. 'Indomitable.' 3. Major-General Okada signs the surrender document. 4. British naval ratings round up Japanese 'suicide troops' in Picnic Bay where they found 150 explosive-filled 'suicide' boats.







Photos, British Official, Topical

**INSTRUMENT OF SURRENDER OF JAPANESE FORCES UNDER THE COMMAND OR CONTROL OF THE SUPREME COMMANDER, JAPANESE EXPEDITIONARY FORCES, SOUTHERN REGIONS, WITHIN THE OPERATIONAL THEATRE OF THE SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, SOUTH EAST ASIA**

1. In pursuance of and in compliance with:

(a) the Instrument of Surrender signed by the Japanese plenipotentiaries by command and on behalf of the Emperor of Japan, the Japanese Government, and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters at Tokyo on 2 September, 1945;

(b) General Order No. 1, promulgated at the same place and on the same date;

(c) the Local Agreement made by the Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions, with the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia, at Rangoon on 27 August, 1945;

in all of which, Instrument of Surrender, General Order and Local Agreement this present Instrument is complementary and which it in no way supersedes, the Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions (Field Marshal Count Terauchi) does hereby surrender unconditionally to the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia (Admiral The Lord Louis Mountbatten) himself and all Japanese sea, ground, air and auxiliary forces under his command or control and within the operational theatre of the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia.

2. The Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions, undertakes to ensure that all orders and instructions that may be issued from time to time by the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia, or by any of his subordinate Naval, Military or Air Force Commanders of whatever rank acting in his name, are scrupulously and promptly obeyed by all Japanese sea, ground, air and auxiliary forces under the command or control of the Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions, and within the operational theatre of the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia.

3. Any disobedience of, or delay or failure to comply with, orders or instructions issued by the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia, or issued on his behalf by any of his subordinate Naval, Military or Air Force Commanders of whatever rank, and any action which the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia, or his subordinate Commander, acting on his behalf, may determine to be detrimental to the Allied Powers, will be dealt with as the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia may decide.

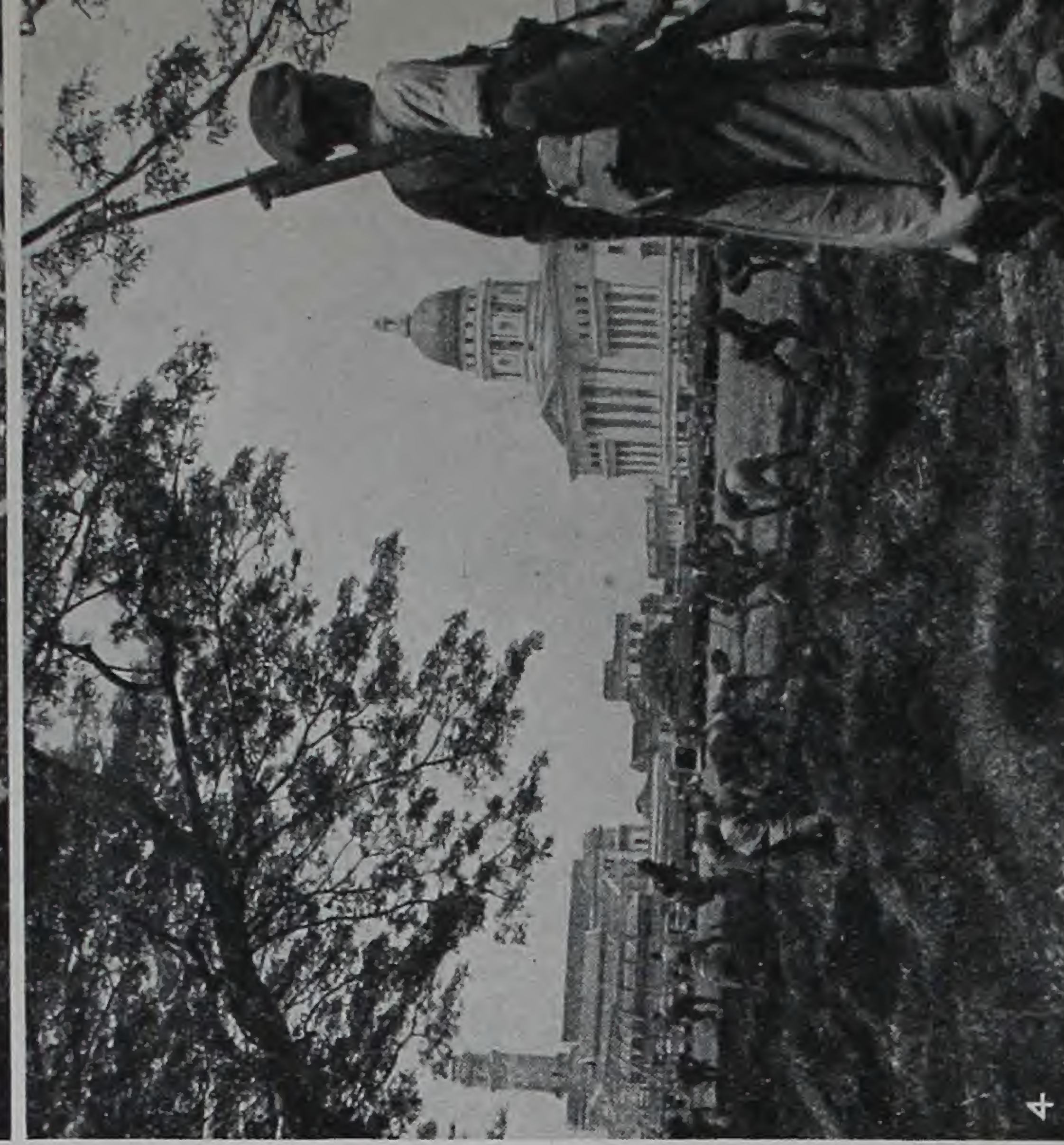
4. This Instrument takes effect from the time and date of signing.

5. This Instrument is drawn up in the English language, which is the only authentic version. In any case of doubt as to its intention or meaning, the decision of the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia is final. It is the responsibility of the Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions, to make such translation into Japanese as he may require.

Signed at Singapore at 0546 hours (GMT) on 12 September, 1945.

陸軍大将 板垣征四郎  
SUPREME COMMANDER  
JAPANESE EXPEDITIONARY FORCES  
SOUTHERN REGIONS.

陸軍大将 板垣征四郎  
SUPREME COMMANDER  
JAPANESE EXPEDITIONARY FORCES  
SOUTHERN REGIONS.



Photos, British Official, Topical

**SINGAPORE FREED AFTER THREE YEARS OF OPPRESSION**

On the morning of September 5, 1945, surrounded by wildly cheering crowds, British, Indian and Gurkha troops went ashore at Singapore. They were met on the quayside by General Itagaki and other Japanese officers. Apart from damage in the dock area, caused by Allied air raids, the city was undamaged. The official surrender of all Japanese forces in South-East Asia took place on September 12 in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Buildings—the actual document is reproduced above—and was received by Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten. The Japanese signatory was General Itagaki, deputizing for Field-Marshal Count Terauchi, Supreme Commander, Japanese Expeditionary Forces, Southern Regions, who was indisposed. 1. General Sir William Slim, C.-in-C., 14th Army; Air-Marshal Sir Keith Park, Allied Air C.-in-C., S.E. Asia; and Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur Power, C.-in-C., East Indies Station, after the surrender ceremony. 2. Hoisting the Union Jack. 3. Released British prisoners outside the gates of the Changi Prison. 4. An Indian soldier in Singapore mounts guard while Japanese troops fill in trenches dug by British prisoners.



## LAYING DOWN OF SWORDS

Under supervision of troops of the 25th Indian Division, Japanese officers laid down their swords at Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, after the surrender of all enemy forces in the area. The official surrender of Malaya took place in Singapore on September 12, 1945.

*Photo, Indian Official*

and flying over thirty miles to an airstrip behind the Allied lines.

The Colonial war effort in its economic aspect continued to be directed towards the maximum production of raw materials required by the United Nations, and to the reduction of imports (with consequent relief to shipping) by increased local cultivation of foodstuffs and other necessities of life.

The West African Supply Centre at Accra (Gold Coast) reported at the beginning of the year that West African production was steadily on the increase. Nigeria was producing increasing quantities of tin and columbite (*see illus. in page 2810*),

while the Gold Coast was able to meet all demands made upon the Colony for manganese and bauxite. The Nigerian rubber crop of 1944 exceeded that of the previous year by 1,400 tons. The output of palm kernels steadily increased

in all four West African territories.

In East Africa, the efforts of Tanganyika to increase its production of pyrethrum met with marked success. In spite of the shortage of manpower, 5,300 acres were brought under this crop. In Kenya there was a widely-expressed desire to assist in alleviating the food situation in Great Britain. In words used by the Governor in the autumn of 1945, "the spontaneous demand to be allowed to help has now assumed the dimensions of a public campaign." Offers were made which were gratefully accepted by the Secretary of State on behalf of the Ministry of Food; and steps were taken by the Kenya Government to organize the collection of the food.

A notable increase in the production of cereals, mainly maize and wheat, was reported from Northern Rhodesia. The amount of wheat sold in 1944 was more than double the pre-war average. The food-growing campaign in Ceylon Schools (*see page 3111*) proceeded vigorously during the opening months of 1945, and played its part in bringing about the improvement in the local food situation which manifested itself early in 1945. In October figures were published showing that between 1939 and 1945 British Guiana produced 6½ million tons of high grade bauxite (compared with a production in 1933 of only 36,000 tons, in 1936 of 170,000 tons).



## JEWISH BRIGADE IN ACTION

It was disclosed on March 24, 1945, that the Jewish Brigade, under the command of Brigadier E. F. Benjamin, had been in action on the 8th Army front in Italy. It was the only Jewish Brigade of the war. The unit was mainly Palestinian, but 37 countries of origin were to be traced among its members. Its sign was the Star of David. Here, a patrol of the Brigade rides through an Italian town on a tank.

*Photo, British Official*





### TONGA'S QUEEN IS HONOURED BY BRITAIN

Queen Salote Tubou of Tonga with visitors from Fiji and Samoa during the celebrations in December 1945 to mark the centenary of the foundation of the kingdom of Tonga, British Protectorate in the South Pacific usually styled the Friendly Islands. The Queen was invested by Sir Alexander Grantham, K.C.M.G., Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, with the insignia of a Dame Grand Cross of the British Empire in recognition of her country's war effort. Top picture shows Royal Marines of H.M.S. 'Euryalus' presenting arms during the ceremony.

Photos, Crown Copyright

An event of special interest took place in October 1945, when the Queen of Tonga was appointed a Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire. She had been an Honorary Dame Commander of the Order since 1932. Few honours conferred by the British Crown can ever have been better deserved. Queen Salote, whose kingdom had been under British protection since 1900, showed herself from the outbreak of the war a staunch and devoted supporter of the Allied cause. She displayed the utmost readiness in rendering assistance, first to the New Zealand military authorities and subsequently to those of the United States, in their plans for the utilization of the island of Tonga as part of the general defence system in the western Pacific (See illus. in page 587).

By January the total amount invested in East African War Bonds amounted to over £8,500,000. By the first week in April, Trinidad's total purchases of War Savings Certificates had reached a figure of over \$2,700,000 (approximately £675,000), while the same Colony's total contribution to the Red Cross and St. John fund amounted to \$780,000 (£195,000).

**Financial  
Aid to  
Britain**

Fiji, by the beginning of the year 1945, had contributed £439,000 to war funds, while Red Cross contributions from the small Colony of Bermuda totalled £12,000 in 1944. The Gold Coast made a gift in money to the Gold Coast Squadron of the R.A.F. In July 1945 the people of Tonga decided to commemorate the victory over Germany by presenting the United Kingdom Government with a fighter aircraft (their third) at a cost of £5,000. During July 1945 the Colonies made further loans to the British Treasury amounting to nearly £520,000. Of this sum £473,000 was free of interest. In addition, loans were made locally in Ceylon and in Fiji to the amounts of Rs.23,586,000 (£1,769,000) and £12,400, respectively.

In a broadcast to the Colonies which he made immediately after the surrender of Japan, the Secretary of State said: "To you all I send congratulations on the occasion of victory and the warmest thanks of His Majesty's Government and of the people of Great Britain for the loyal and generous part that all the varied communities of the British Colonial Empire have played in achieving it. Your contribution has been a noble and valuable one, and has shown itself in many varied forms: in service in the armed forces and the merchant navy; and in civil defence;





#### BRITISH GUIANA CELEBRATES VE DAY

Britain's only possession in South America, British Guiana, with a population of over 330,000, celebrated VE Day with enthusiasm. Georgetown, the capital, was brightly hung with Allied flags, and a day of rejoicing culminated in a broadcast by the Governor, Sir Gordon James Lethem, K.C.M.G., here seen announcing the end of hostilities from the balcony of Government House.

*Photo, Associated Press*

in helping to produce vital materials of war; in the maintenance of essential services in your own lands; in the gifts and loans of money you have made for the furtherance of the war; and in voluntary welfare work and hospitality for His Majesty's Forces. The Chiefs of Staff of the three Fighting Services have asked me specially to associate them with this message of thanks."

On the military side, by far the largest contribution came from tropical

#### African Military Strength

Africa. African troops served in Abyssinia (*see* Chapter 164) and East Africa (*see* Chapter 163). Their service in Burma has already been referred to in this chapter. Their successful employment, so far from their homes and under conditions so alien to their past experience, constituted one of the remarkable episodes of the war. When Rangoon was liberated early in May, the total strength of the African forces in India and Burma was estimated at 119,000 (East Africans, 46,000 and West Africans, 73,000). At the same time nearly 50,000 African troops were serving in the Middle East and over 200,000 in their home commands in Africa. The total number of Africans in arms amounted in round figures to 372,000, of whom 227,000 were East Africans and 145,500 West Africans.

Not until November 1945 was it learned that a British N.C.O., serving with the 1st/6th King's African Rifles,

had won a V.C. posthumously at Colito, Abyssinia, in May 1941. He was Sergeant Nigel Grey Leakey, whose "courage and magnificent fighting spirit" were the means of driving off an enemy counter-attack mounted with tanks. With complete disregard for his own safety, and in face of withering machine-gun and rifle fire from the enemy's ground troops and from more tanks in front, Sergeant Leakey leaped on top of a tank coming in from behind, wrenched open the turret, shot the Commander and the crew, with the exception of the driver whom he forced to drive in to cover. Having failed to get the cannon of this tank to fire, he dismounted, calling out "I'll get them on foot," and charged across ground which was being swept by machine gun and shell fire from other enemy tanks. He leapt on to a second tank, opened the turret and killed one of the crew, but was himself shot dead as he did so.

In the Western Pacific, locally raised troops did excellent work in the Solomon Islands campaign and elsewhere. Maltese troops shared in the all-important task of the defence of Malta. Units from Cyprus, Palestine, Mauritius and the West Indies saw service in various fields. Colonial personnel made

a valuable contribution both to the R.A.F. and to the Mercantile Marine.

On the economic side, the most important function discharged by the Colonial Empire was the supply of raw materials urgently needed for war purposes, the normal sources of which had been cut off by the enemy. Bauxite (from British Guiana), tin (from Nigeria), copper (from Northern Rhodesia), sisal (from East Africa) and sea island cotton (from the West Indies) were only a few of the commodities for which reliance had, for the most part, to be placed upon Colonial sources of supply. Immense efforts were made to increase the output of rubber in Ceylon and Nigeria, and of sisal in East Africa. Production of food had to be increased in almost every Colonial territory, it being essential that all overseas territories should, so far as possible, render themselves self-supporting in respect of the main necessities of life.

To all these tasks the Colonial Empire applied itself with determination and with a large measure of success. The tribute paid to its peoples by Mr. Churchill in June 1943 (*see* page 2814) and by Mr. Hall in August 1945 did no more than justice to their whole-hearted and patriotic co-operation.



# THE MERCHANT NAVY'S HEROIC SERVICE

*Facts and figures in this chapter sum up the war service rendered to the Allies by their Merchant Navies, and in particular by that of Great Britain, whose merchantmen bore the brunt of Axis attack in the Atlantic, the Arctic and the Mediterranean and did magnificent service in the Far East as well.*

*The history of the Merchant Service in 1944 is told in Chapter 304*

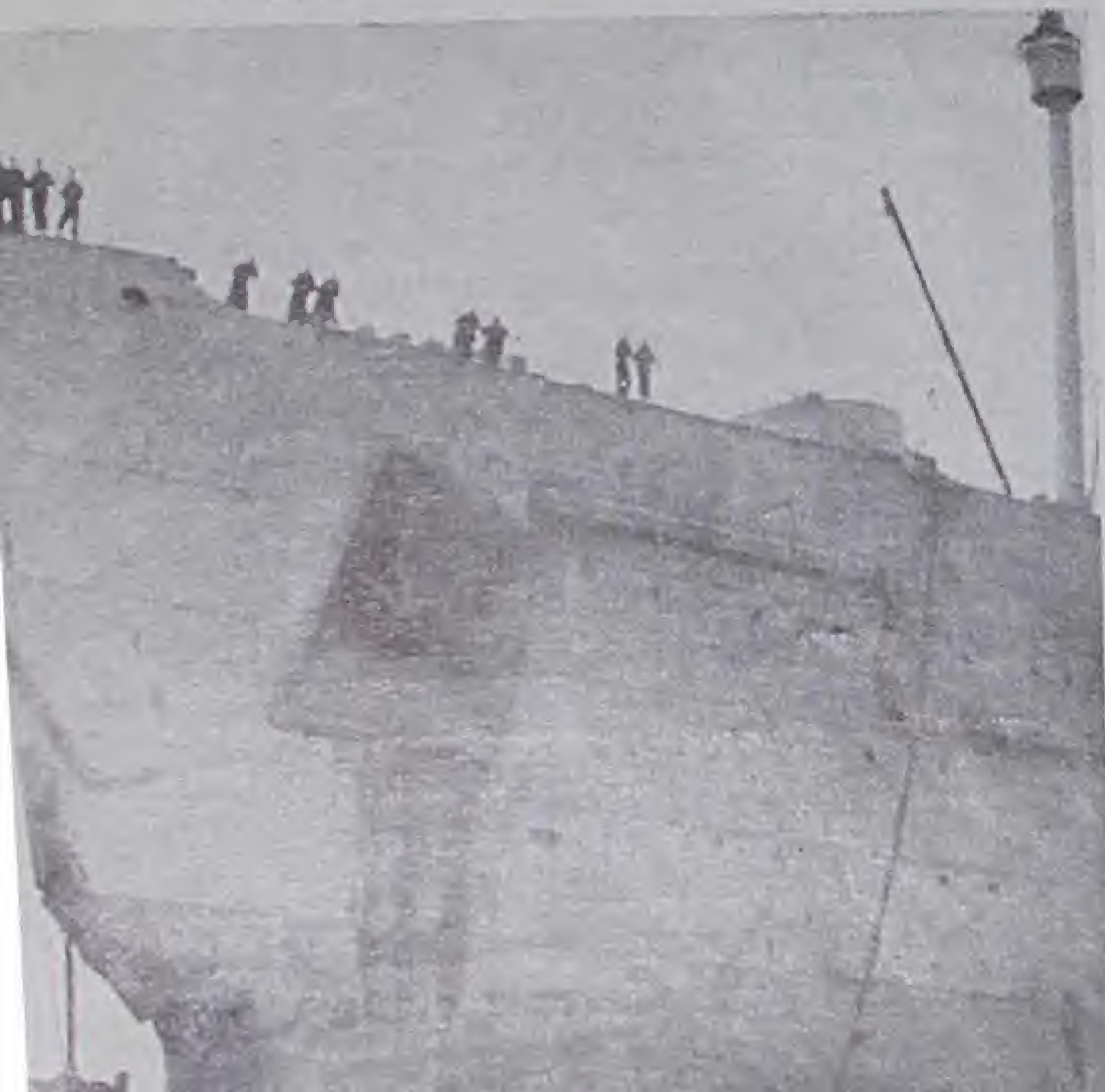
**I**N the last months of the war in the west, large convoys continued to bridge the Atlantic, unloading in the harbours of Britain soldiers, machines of war, and food. London and Southampton were the principal supply bases of the British and American armies of liberation respectively; Antwerp was the main allied intake on the Continent. Across the North Sea ran an immense system of maritime routes over which poured men, weapons and supplies for the build-up for the spring offensive.

Many of these troops and much of this material were transported in Allied warships, but a large proportion was carried by passenger ships, cargo vessels and particularly coasters under the Red Ensign. The convoy routes to the Continent were protected with marked success during this period from the special dangers in the Channel and the North Sea of mine, torpedo and bomb. The most concentrated attacks occurred in the Scheldt Estuary where the enemy employed midget submarines and human torpedoes (*see page 3497*). Thanks to the watchfulness of the Navy he had little success. In the docks of London and Antwerp, ships were hit by flying-

## 'QUEEN MARY' IN COLLISION

Over 150 British ocean-going passenger ships were converted for troop-carrying in wartime, among them the liner 'Queen Mary' which, with her sister ship, the 'Queen Elizabeth,' transported four million U.S. troops. Below, the 'Queen Mary's' damaged bows after she had rammed the cruiser H.M.S. 'Curaçao' in the Atlantic in 1942.

*Photo, Keystone*



bombs and rockets. One ship lying in the Surrey Commercial Docks was unfortunate enough to be hit twice by flying-bombs within a few days.

The opening of the year witnessed the last and heaviest German attempt to cut Britain's sea-lines. Equipped with the "Schnorkel" and other defensive devices (*see Chapter 342*), the U-boats swarmed on all the main convoy routes. During January and February there was a slight increase in the number of Allied vessels sunk by submarines, but Allied methods of attack led to a rise in the number of enemy submarines destroyed, and by March, when the onward drive of the Allied Armies had robbed the U-boats of many of their bases, the last submarine offensive petered out. The convoy system continued in the Atlantic for some weeks after the end of hostilities in Europe, but on May 28 the Admiralty announced that, as from midnight on that date, no further convoys would sail in non-combat areas, and that vessels sailing in such areas would henceforth be released from the necessity of darkening ship at sea.

An analysis issued by the Admiralty on June 13 of Empire, Allied, and neutral merchant ships lost by enemy action from September 3, 1939 to VE Day is given to the right, figures in parentheses representing gross tonnage in

thousands. In addition, normal marine risks caused the following losses: British Empire, 610 ships of 1,120,000 gross tons; Allies other than the U.S.A., 261 ships of 710,000 gross tons; neutrals, 490 ships of 680,000 gross tons. These figures include Finnish, Hungarian, Italian and Japanese losses up to the time those countries became enemies; losses of Italian ships after Italy became a co-belligerent are also included. French ships are included up to the date of the defeat of France, after which Free French, but not Vichy-controlled, vessels are included. Five U.S. ships lost by enemy action before December 7, 1941 are included among neutral losses.

Germany's surrendered merchant fleet totalled 1,189,600 tons. One-third was handed to the Soviet Union, to be shared with Poland. The other two-thirds was allotted to (in percentages): Great Britain and Colonies, 46.04; U.S.A., 17.82; Australia, 0.19; Belgium, 1.33; Canada, 1.42; Denmark, 2.19; Egypt, 0.23; France, 7.68; Greece, 4.99; India, 0.24; New Zealand, 0.14; Norway, 10.14; Holland, 6.59; Yugoslavia, 0.86; South Africa, 0.14; Britain's share was about 365,000 tons, worth over £6,000,000.

After VE Day, the war service of the Merchant Marine continued in and to the Far East, while the supply of the Armies of Occupation on the Continent, the feeding and supply of the devastated areas of

## Pooling of Allied Ships Continues

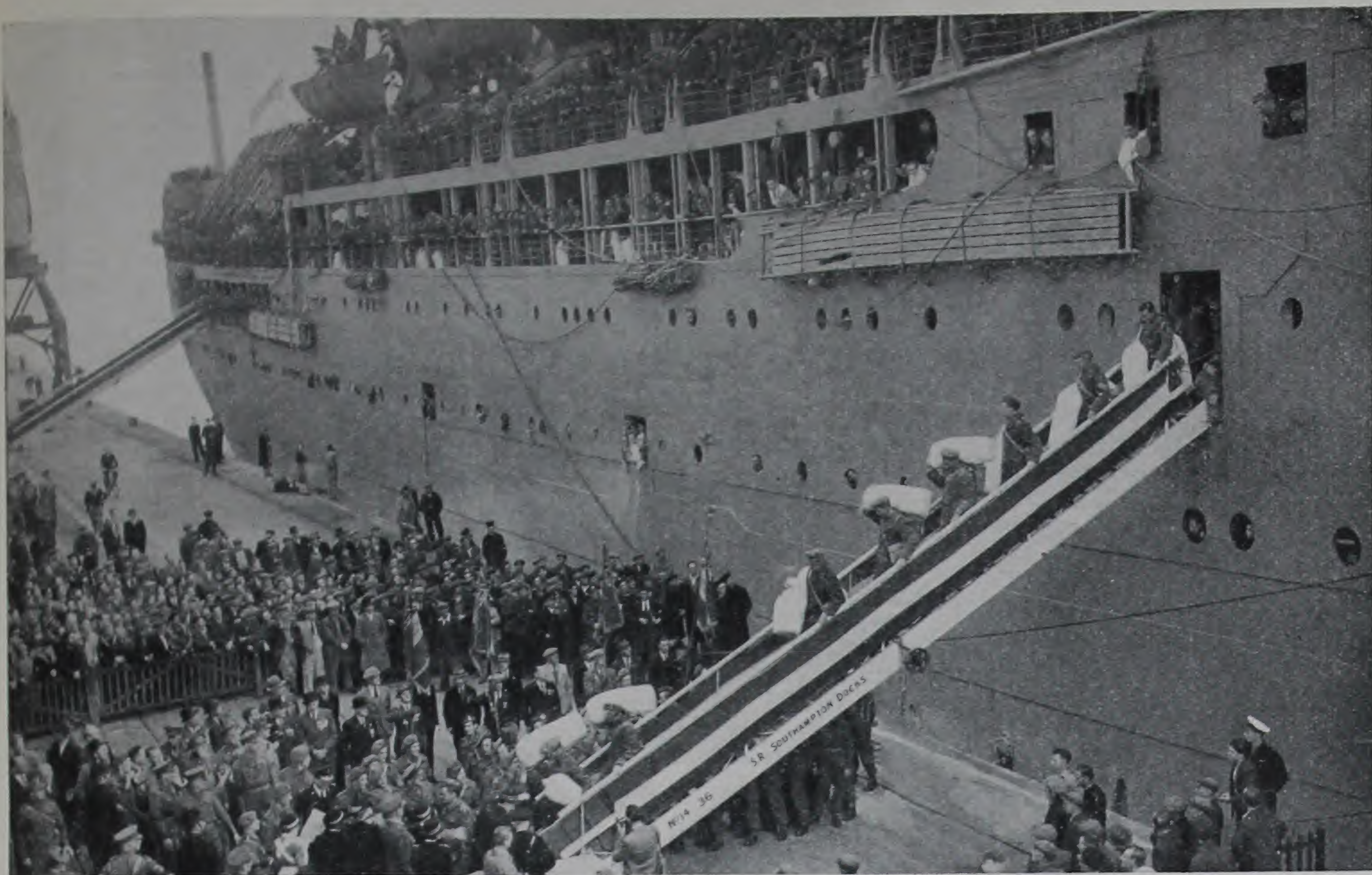
Europe, and the continued carriage of the food and material required by Britain engaged many other merchant ships. On May 24 the United Maritime Authority, established by an international agreement of August 1944, came into operation: it continued the arrangements already existing among the United Nations for pooling their ships

	British Empire	United States	All other Allies	Neutral	Total
U-boat .. .. .	1,360 (7,620)	440 (2,740)	670 (3,260)	300 (930)	2,770 (14,550)
Mine .. .. .	340 (830)	15 (90)	75 (210)	90 (270)	520 (1,400)
Surface craft .. ..	210 (970)	13 (90)	87 (460)	20 (50)	330 (1,570)
Aircraft .. .. .	440 (1,590)	58 (360)	202 (770)	50 (110)	750 (2,830)
Other or Unknown Causes .. .. .	220 (370)	12 (30)	138 (330)	30 (60)	400 (790)
Totals	2,570 (11,380)	538 (3,310)	1,172 (5,030)	490 (1,420)	4,770 (21,140)

for "all military and other tasks" and "for the supplying of all liberated areas as well as of the United Nations generally and territories under their control." The arrangement was to extend for six months after the suspension of hostilities in the Far East.

Merchant convoys carried men and supplies to the main Allied bases in the Far East; and ships under the Red Ensign largely made up the "Fleet Train," a mobile floating supply base, composed of more than a hundred vessels, which supplied food, water, ammunition and fuel at sea to the many types of men-of-war in the British Pacific Fleet. Most of the ships were water-





### EX-PRISONERS HOME FROM THE FAR EAST

The first ship to reach England bringing home ex-prisoners of war from the Far East docked at Southampton on October 7, 1945. She was the P. & O. liner 'Corfu,' carrying 1,134 ex-P.O.W., most of them British Army troops who had been in captivity for three-and-a-half years. They were officially received by Lord Nathan, Under Secretary of State for War, and by General Sir Ronald Adam, the Adjutant-General, who read them a message of 'Welcome Home' from the King and Queen.

*Photo, G.P.U.*

borne supply dumps; some were floating repair shops; others were ferries detailed as required to run services to the base ports. In the vast distances of the Pacific Ocean the Fleet could not afford the time to make periodical returns to its bases for supplies and overhaul; instead the base, in the form of the Fleet Train, went to the warships.

All ships in Pacific waters continued to be subjected to the dangers of mine, torpedo and bomb. "Suicide" pilots, who crashed their aircraft loaded with high explosive on to Allied ships, usually selected the broad decks of aircraft carriers on which to immolate themselves, but transports and supply ships also suffered this form of attack.

With the end of the Japanese war, the vast homeward movement of troops which began soon after VE Day was intensified. Large numbers of released prisoners of war, casualties and troops due for demobilization awaited repatriation to Britain and the Empire from the Continent, North Africa, India and elsewhere. Even larger numbers of American forces were scheduled to return as soon as possible to the United States. In addition to all these commitments, a substantial number of men had to be transported outward for occupation and clearing up duties, in place of homeward bound troops. The

bulk of this two-way traffic was carried in merchantmen.

During the war one hundred and fifty-one British ocean-going passenger ships were converted for troop carrying. Stripped of their fittings and given the ubiquitous wartime cloak of grey worn by naval and Allied merchant vessels alike, British controlled ships carried over two million troops on long sea voyages. A further four million were carried between the United Kingdom and the Continent. About forty of this British troop-carrying fleet, including the "Empress of Britain," "Viceroy of India," "Orcades," "Strathallan," and "Windsor Castle" among many famous vessels, were sunk. Twenty-four British liners were converted to hospital ships; of these, the "Newfoundland" and the "Talamba" were sunk. The others now began their last work of mercy in bringing home the wounded, the sick, and the ill-nourished, often ill-used prisoners of war, many of them free only after long years of captivity.

In the course of the year 1945, the following groups were moved in British civilian ships:

30,832 American casualties lifted from north-west Europe to the United Kingdom in hospital ships.

36,500 ex-prisoners of war repatriated from the Far East to the United Kingdom.

32,500 Indian ex-prisoners of war repatriated to India.

40,508 ex-prisoners of war repatriated from Germany to the Dominions. A further 2,670 were sent home via the Middle East.

Over 23,000 more prisoners and internees were repatriated from the Far East during the first quarter of 1946.

For trooping across the Channel and the North Sea, the L.S.I. (Landing Ships, Infantry) were supplemented and later, to a great extent, replaced by the "Royal Daffodil," the "Canterbury," and other pleasure steamers and mail packets well known to peacetime travellers. From Italy, North Africa, India, Burma and the Far East came the big liners packed with homecoming men. An even greater trek westward began to bear the bulk of the American and

**Cross-  
Channel  
Troopships**





### THE 'QUEEN ELIZABETH'

On October 12, 1945, it was announced that the liner 'Queen Elizabeth,' allocated under Lease-Lend for ferrying U.S. troops across the Atlantic, would be used for repatriating British troops. She is here being refitted at Southampton before sailing with Canadians to Halifax.

*Photos, G.P.U. ; Planet*

Canadian forces back across the Atlantic. Predominant in this movement were the famous Cunard White Star liners "Queen Mary" and "Queen Elizabeth." During the course of the war, these two gigantic liners between them transported more than four million men; together they brought to the United Kingdom more than one third of the American armed forces serving in the European theatre of war. A trooping operation of a different kind—the transportation of some 40,000 women and 20,000 children in the United Kingdom to join their American husbands and fathers in the States—

was also carried out by big liners.

The Japanese collapse came a little sooner than had been expected, but plans for the transitional period between war and the resumption of international commerce had already been prepared; plans in which the British shipbuilding industry bulked large. During the late summer and autumn, company after company announced its shipbuilding programme, and the total number of ships laid down was something of a barometer of the prospects of overseas trade.

As a result of this programme, most British shipbuilding yards had work on hand that would last at least two years. Some of it was for Britain's hard-hit allies, but the majority of the passenger and cargo

liners, tankers, refrigerated ships, coasters, etc., laid down were for British lines. The tramp shipowners alone waited to make replacements until the policy of the United States in the matter of her vast armada of Liberty and other wartime ships was declared. The following statistics, published by the U.S.

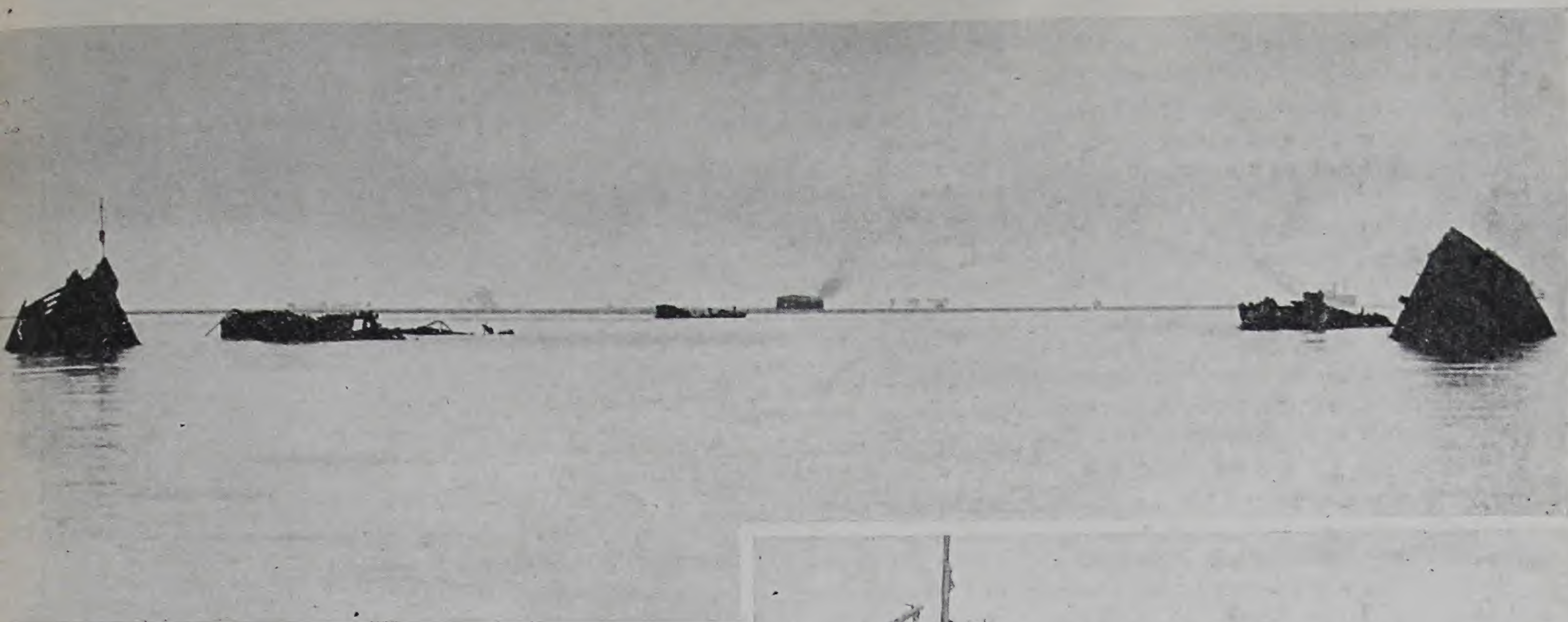
#### Merchant Shipping, 1939-1945

Maritime Commission on January 26, 1946, show the immense preponderance of United States shipping after, as compared with before, the war. At the end of 1945 the United States merchant navy was 5,521 seagoing ships of 1,600 tons gross and over; it had been 1,401 in 1939. The deadweight tonnage of the world's leading merchant fleets in 1945 and 1939 were as follows:

	1945	1939
U.S.A.	56,800,000	12,100,000
British Empire	19,600,000	23,300,000
Norway	3,950,000	6,400,000
Netherlands	2,090,000	3,300,000
Greece	1,700,000	2,700,000
France	1,300,000	2,900,000
Soviet Union	1,200,000	1,500,000

The British shipbuilding industry, stimulated after years of stagnation by the forced pace of war production, was in good shape to meet this demand for new tonnage. (During the war, the Clyde alone built 304 merchantmen in addition to naval construction and repair work.) New means of propulsion, new navigational aids developed during the war were available for adaptation in civilian shipping, and changes had

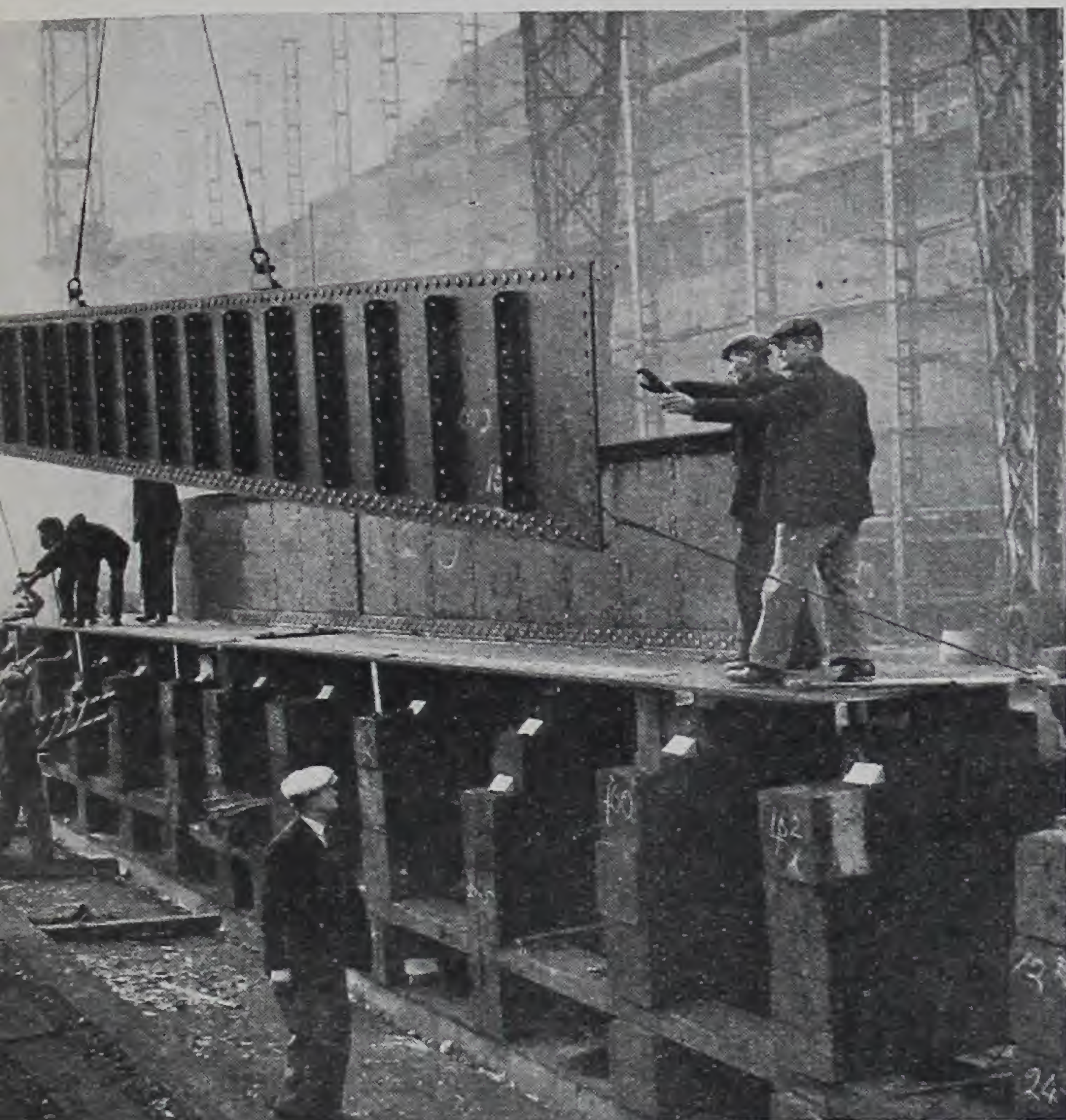




### PRICE OF VICTORY AT SEA

Showing at low tide in the Thames Estuary, east of Southend, these hulks of seven ships lost from a single convoy symbolized the British Empire's shipping losses—11,380,000 tons in all—during the war. Right, the 10,000-ton Liberty ship 'Horace Binney,' mined off Belgium on VE Day, brought to London by P.L.A. wreck-lighters and made seaworthy again—a triumph of salvage.

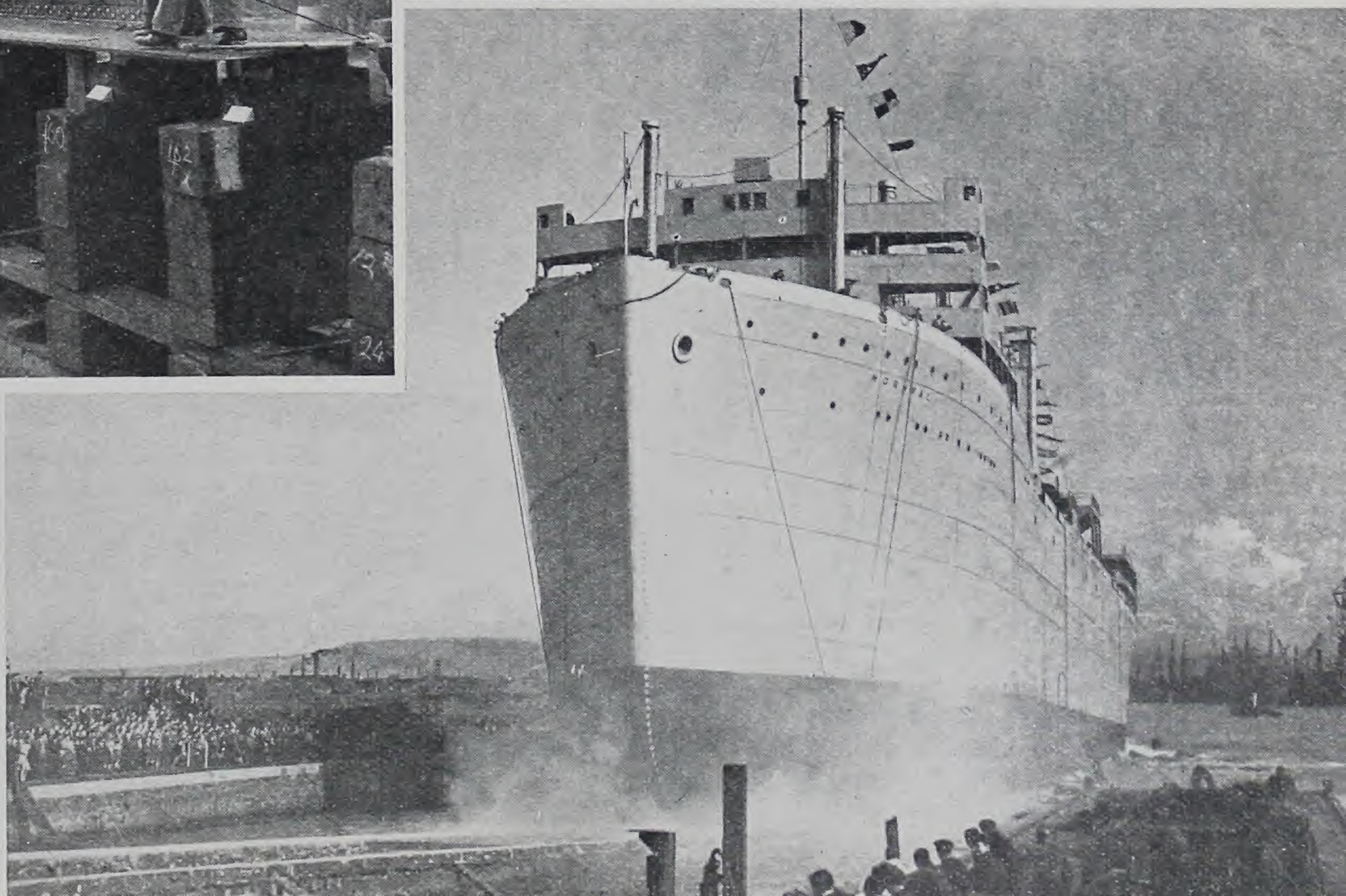
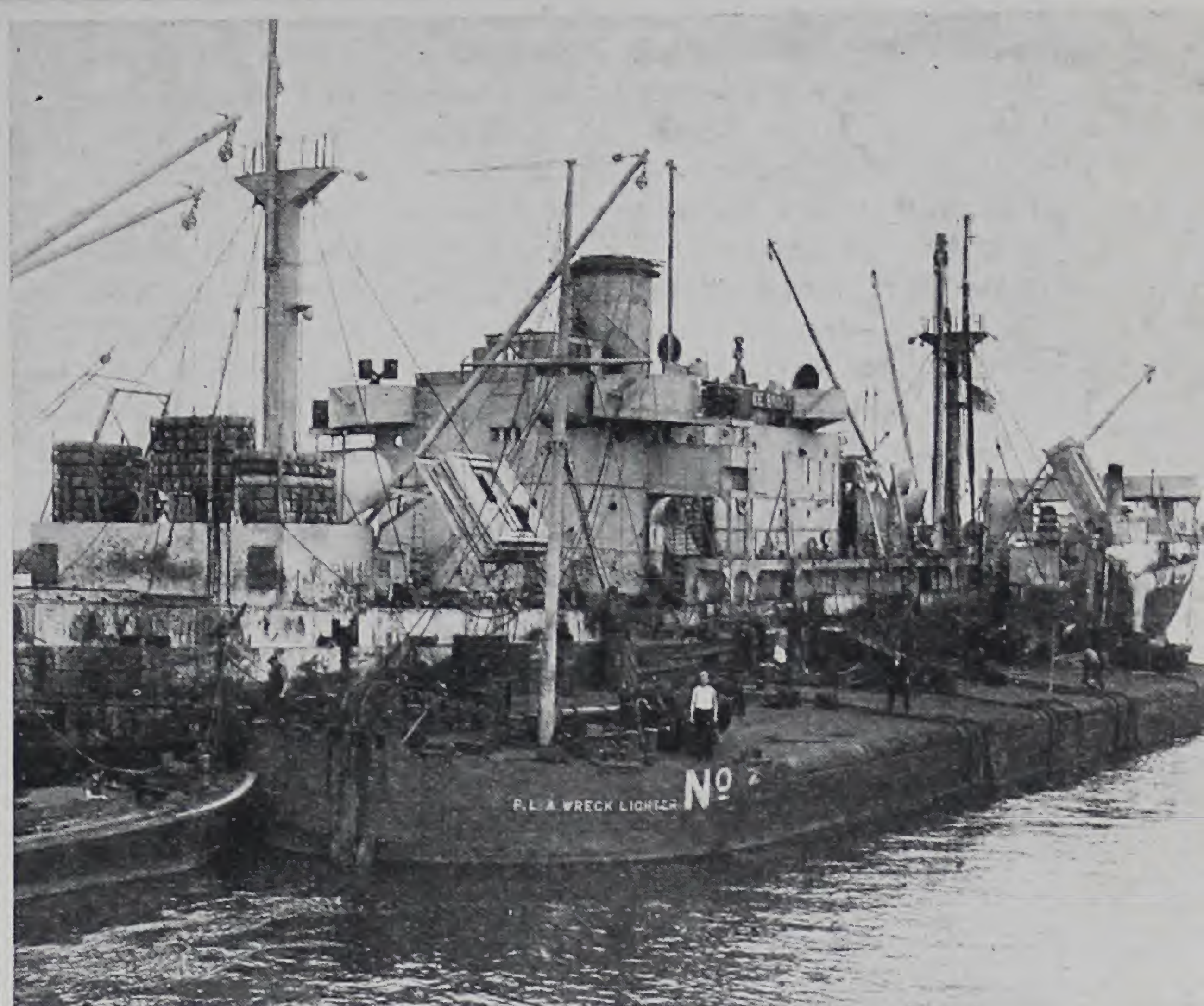
*Photos, Planet; Fox*



### BRITAIN BUILDS NEW MERCHANT SHIPS

Replacement of the heavy losses of merchant shipping was an urgent task of British shipyards during and after the war. Above, assembling the keel of a 13,500-tons Cunard White Star liner—provisionally labelled '629'—at John Brown's, Clydebank, in November 1945. Right, launching the 'Norhval,' one of two 21,000-tons whaling factory ships built at Haverton-on-Tees.

*Photos, L.N.A.; Topical*





also been made in methods of welding, an increased use made of prefabrication.

In the last two months of the year, repair and maintenance work began to be put in hand in the repair yards.

Ship after ship shed her Renovation sombre grey, and the Begins guns and other defensive devices with which the Merchant Service had been equipped during the war. By the end of the year a substantial number of vessels had emerged from the repair berths once more in their normal house colours.

During the last few days of the year, natural causes rendered the routine of shipping chaotic. First came a ninety-mile-an-hour gale which disorganized the leave and repatriation services in the Channel and the North Sea, and also held up the departure of Canadian and American forces returning across the Atlantic. Hard on its heels came one of the worst and most persistent fogs of the year—and a large number of floating mines, set adrift by the gale, were an added menace in the sea lanes.

Looking back over the war, it can

#### G.I. BRIDE SHIP

After serving as a troop transport and, after the war, carrying U.S. soldiers home, the liner 'Queen Mary' took to the United States many British-born wives and children of American service men, two of whom are seen in one of the specially fitted nursery cabins.

be clearly seen that the main-spring of victory was sea power. Without sea power Britain could not have received food, supplies and reinforcements. The Dunkirk and Crete evacuations, the North African and Italian landings, the invasion of France and the subjection of the Japanese island garrisons—in fact, all the main operations of the war—were made possible only by the Allies' wealth of shipping and their



centuries of experience in its efficient use.

Merchantmen went out to trade armed in self-defence. Royal Naval gunners and soldiers of the Maritime Regiment manned the guns in some merchant vessels, but 10,000 merchant seamen also qualified as gunners during the war (see illus. in page 2751). Engagements were fought daily between ocean traders and enemy war vessels and aircraft. Men from the bench, the factory, the shop, the desk, and the plough

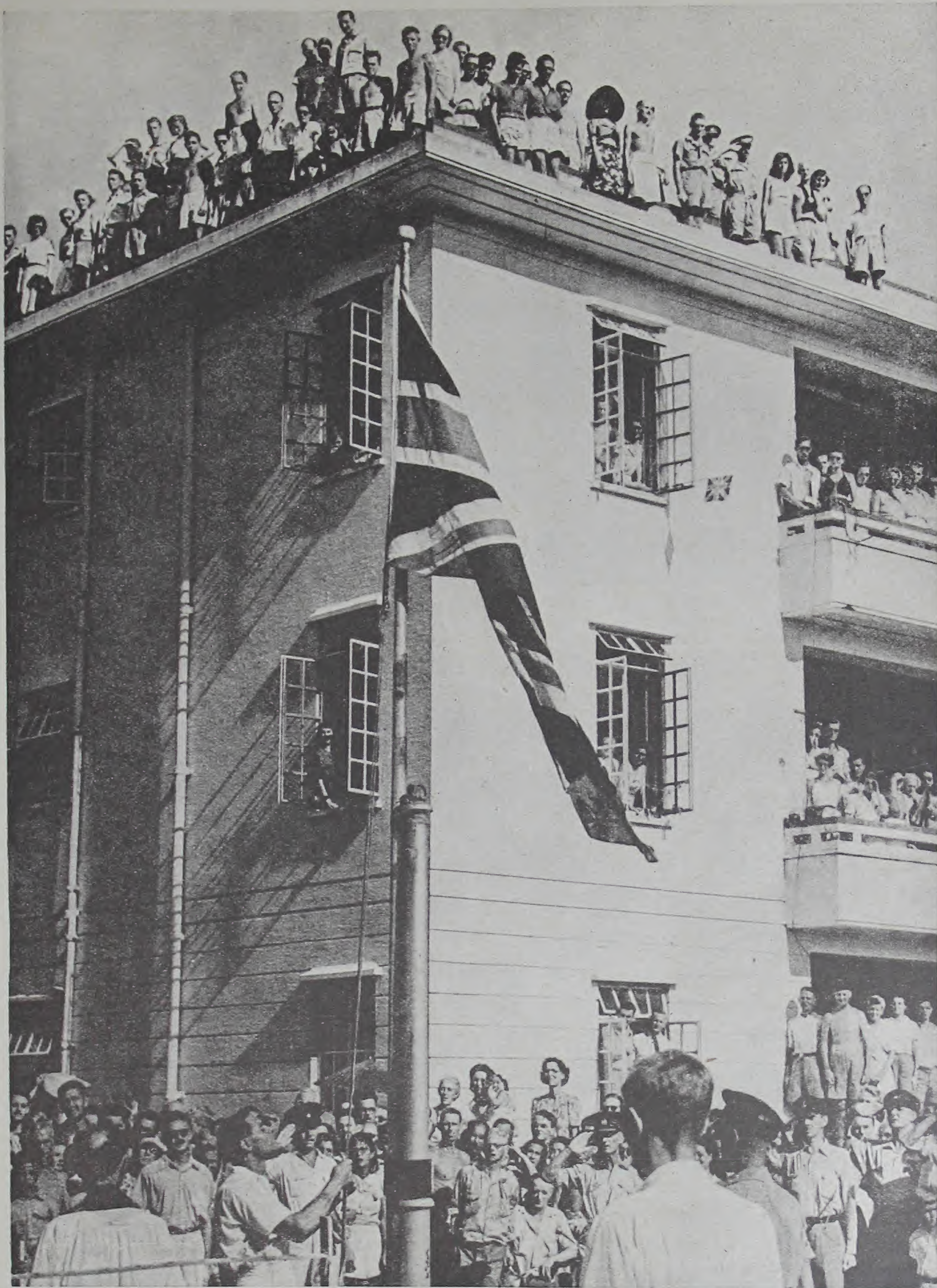
#### GERMAN SHIPS DIVIDED AMONG THE ALLIES

The International Reparations Agency, sitting in Brussels, announced on April 23, 1946, that Britain and her Colonies were to receive the largest portion allotted to the Western Allies of Germany's merchant fleet. The allocation was on the basis of the tonnage—in Britain's case 10,870,000 tons—lost by each Allied country during the war. Here are German merchantmen which were sailed under Royal Marine guard from Kiel to the Firth of Forth in June 1945.

*Photo British Official*







*Photo, British Official*

#### INTERNEES GREET LIBERATION AT HONGKONG

British Marines and naval ratings, going ashore at Hongkong on August 30, 1945, had a sharp but brief clash with Japanese 'suicide' troops in the dockyard area. Four days later a proclamation announced the establishment of a British Military Administration. Here some of the 2,400 internees freed at Camp Stanley sing 'God Save the King' as the Union Jack is hoisted there for the first time for three-and-a-half years. The internees were released in person by Rear-Admiral C. H. J. Harcourt, commander of the British Task Force, appointed C.-in-C., Hongkong, on Sept. 9.





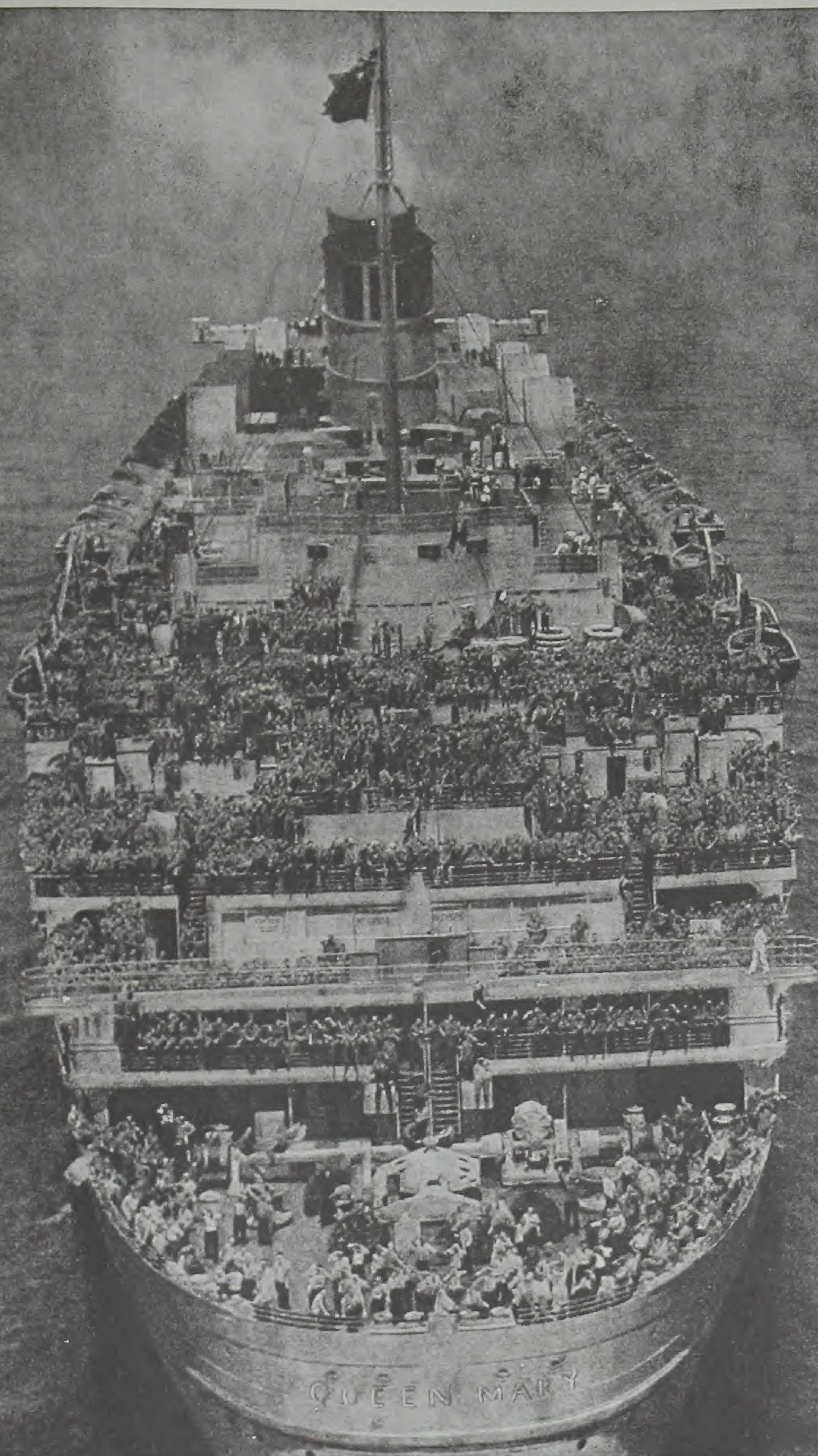
#### WEWAK FELL TO AN AUSTRALIAN Pincer MOVEMENT

In February 1945, Australian forces in the coastal area of northern New Guinea were closing in on the Japanese base at Wewak from both east and west. Units of the 6th Infantry Division, advancing from the Driniumor River, took But and Dagua airfields (about 25 miles west of Wewak) late in March. At Dagua (above) 32 fighters and 19 medium bombers were found disabled by the R.A.A.F. By mid-May the two forces met ; in the final assault on Wewak that ensued, Matilda tanks covered by infantry screens (below) were used.

*Photos, Australian Official*







#### THE 'QUEEN MARY' TAKES HOME U.S. TROOPS FROM EUROPE

In the House of Commons on October 12, 1945, it was announced that, as a result of discussions with the U.S. Government, it had been agreed that, though the 'Queen Elizabeth' and the 'Aquitania' should in future be used for repatriating British troops, the 'Queen Mary' would remain for the time being at U.S. disposal. In return for the use of the 'Queen Mary' an equivalent number of smaller U.S. ships were to be handed over to move British forces from areas where the use of so large a vessel would be wasteful or impracticable. Here the 'Queen Mary' approaches New York in June with over 14,000 U.S. troops returning from Europe.

*Photo, Sport & General*





Photo, J. Hall, Gourcock

#### WHEN THE PORT OF LONDON WAS 'TRANSFERRED' TO THE CLYDE

One of Britain's most astonishing moves to counter Luftwaffe attacks was made in late 1940 when the activities of the Port of London were partially transferred to the Clyde Estuary. Under the direction of the Clyde Anchorage Emergency Port, a vast port at sea was devised in safely-enclosed waters where Allied ships could anchor and, without touching land, load and discharge their cargoes overseas. Over 600 London dockers journeyed to the Clyde, with some 300 Thames barges and portable grain bucket-elevators. From September 1940-August 1945, the 'Port in the Sea' discharged and loaded 1,885 ships, cargo totalling 2,056,833 tons. Among the ships here lying off the Gourcock anchorages is the 'Queen Mary' (left centre).



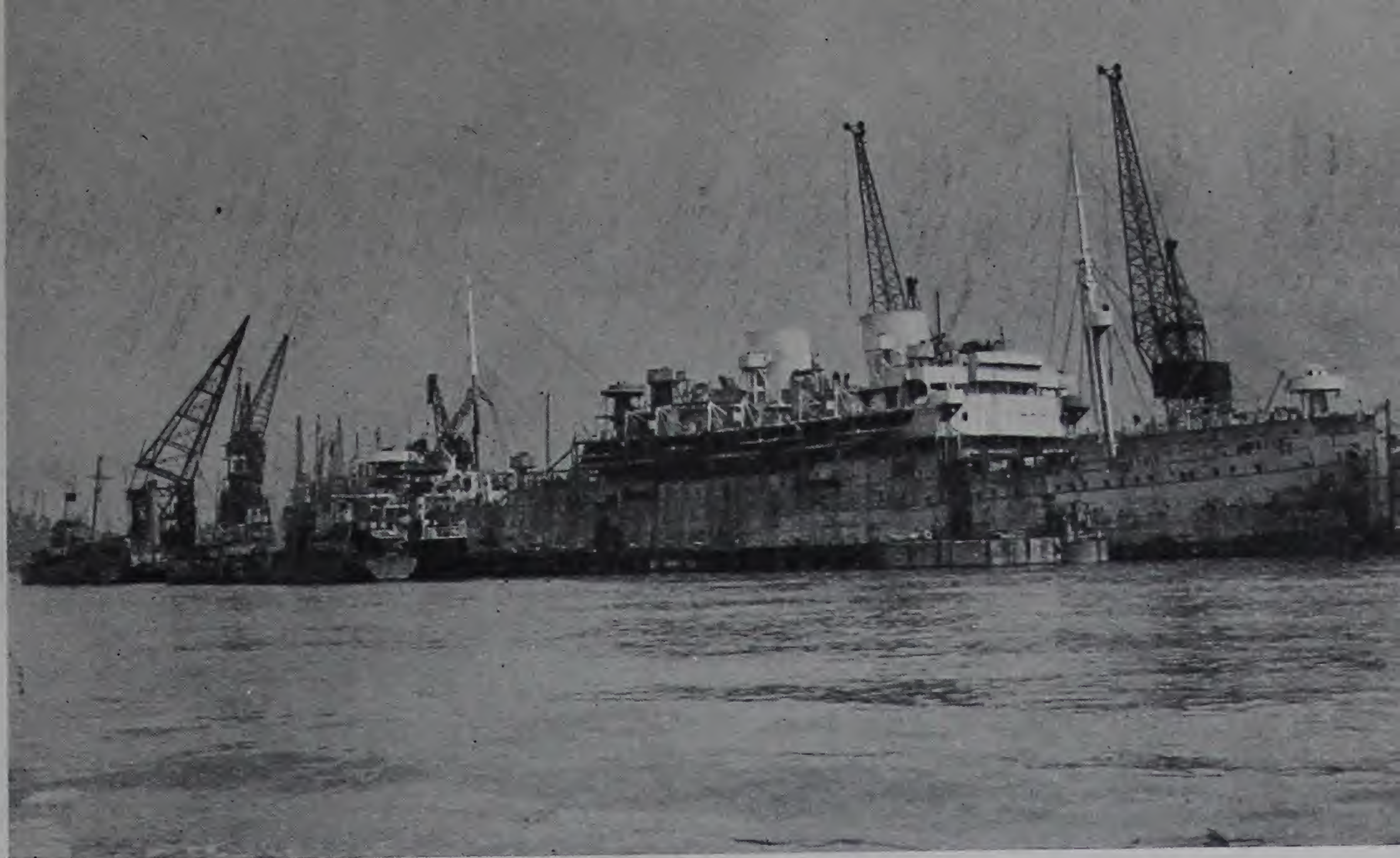
served in the wartime ranks of the Merchant Service. Forty British liners were taken over by the Royal Navy and converted into auxiliary cruisers: "Rawalpindi" (see pages 395, 399, 1753) and "Jervis Bay" (see Chapter 125) head the list.

New groups made their appearance in the British Merchant Service. Vessels designated "Empire," including all shapes, sizes and types of craft, from tugs and motor coasters to large ocean-going cargo ships, were operated for the Ministry of War Transport. "Sams," so called in compliment to their country of origin, were American wartime freighters on charter to the Ministry of War Transport. A large fleet of "Forts" were wartime Canadian-built cargo carriers.

A number of wartime inventions helped navigation at sea. Radar, the all-seeing "eye" which played so important a part in gunnery and in the air, was also of great value at sea—a value not confined to war conditions.

New methods of construction, dual-purpose ships, navigational aids, life-saving appliances, were adopted, many adaptable to general use at sea.

One of the greatest stories of the war is undoubtedly that of the men of the Merchant Service. Though civilians, they fought in every theatre of war. Merchant Service casualties from September 3, 1939 to August 14, 1945 were given by the Prime Minister to the



### DEMOBILIZATION OF MERCHANT SHIPPING

The Minister of War Transport announced on December 18, 1945, that cargo ships and tankers, except those employed on troopship or service duties, would be released from requisition on the termination of voyages after March 2, 1946, when the wartime charters expired. Here the S.S. 'Langibby Castle' is in dry dock at Southampton having her first overhaul since the outbreak of war. As a troopship she was damaged by torpedo off the Azores.

House of Commons on November 29, 1945 as:

Deaths .. .. .	30,189
Missing .. .. .	5,264
Wounded .. .. .	4,402
Internees .. .. .	5,556

The figure for deaths included those who were known at the time of the statement to have died in internment and those presumed dead in missing ships, but excluded deaths from natural causes; the figures for deaths, missing, and internees included men of all

nationalities who served in British registered ships and fishing boats, and British subjects who served on foreign ships requisitioned or chartered by H.M. Government during the war; the figure for internees included those who had been repatriated or had escaped.

The longest strain was in the Atlantic, where the fight began nine hours after the outbreak of hostilities with the sinking of the "Athenia," and lasted to V.E. Day, and a little beyond. During the war in Europe 75,000 ships were escorted across the Atlantic in 2,200 convoys, the largest totalling 167 ships. (See also colour inset in Chapter 368.) The fiercest test was on the Malta run (see Chapter 240 and Historic Document 264, page 2600). But Malta was saved and remembers with gratitude the "Orari," the "Cornwall" and many another ship.

The worst test, combining continual strain and fierce attack, was the Northern Convoy Route (see pages 2396, 2850, 3035), where nature added blizzards, ice and snow to the air and underwater menace; 829 British and Allied merchant seamen lost their lives on this route. In the 41 convoys that went, 792 ships sailed outward and 62 were lost; 739 ships sailed for home and 28 were lost—a percentage of 7.8 and 3.8 respectively, compared with under one per cent in the Atlantic convoys. The Royal Navy lost two cruisers, six destroyers, three corvettes, three minesweepers and 1,840 men. At this price, over 3,500,000 tons of war material were delivered to the Soviet Union (see also page 3562).

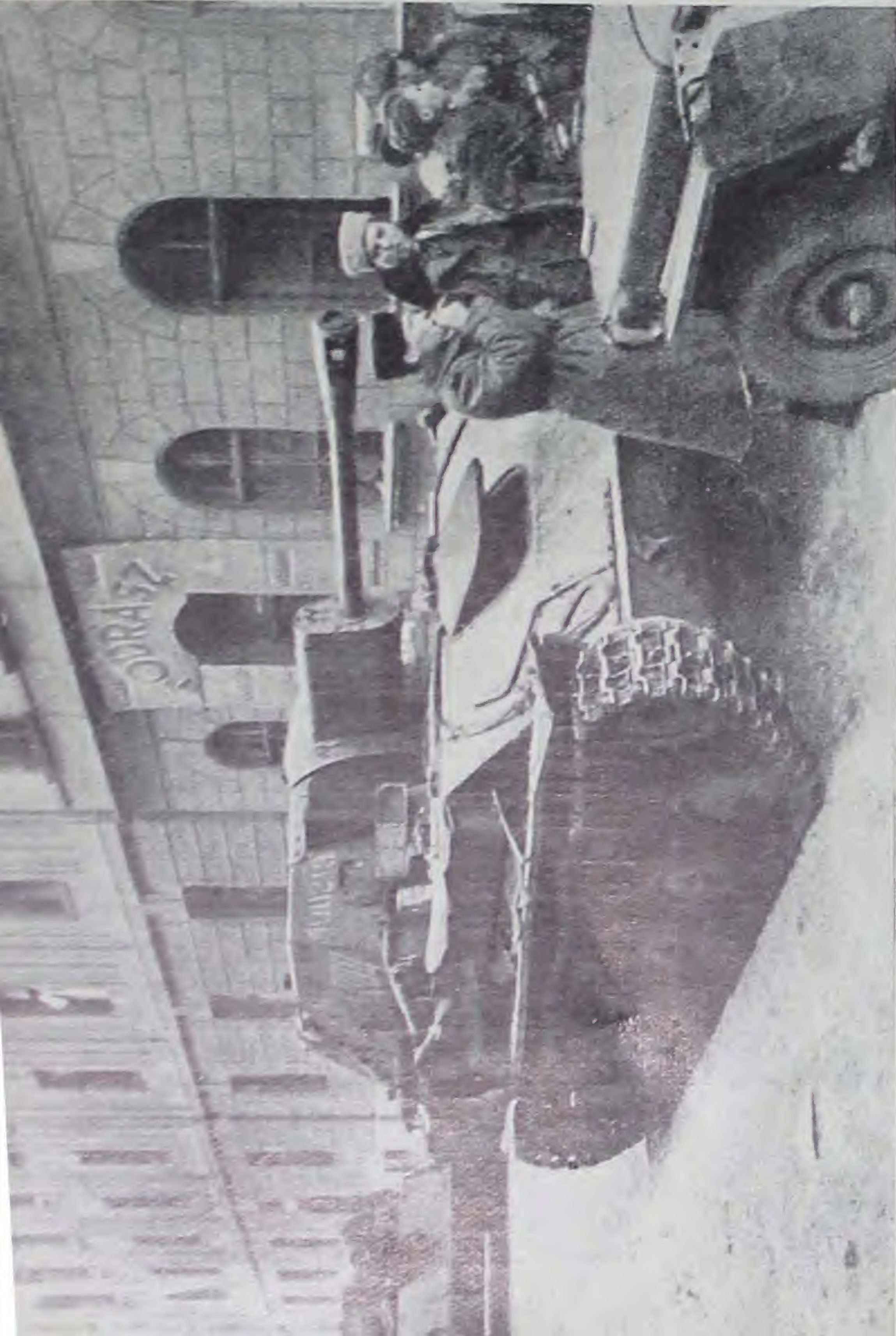


### TRANSPORT OF U.N.R.R.A. SUPPLIES

The British Merchant Navy played an important part in transporting food and other essential commodities supplied to stricken Europe by U.N.R.R.A. This herd of cattle, seen on the quay-side at Danzig, Poland, was given to U.N.R.R.A. by individual American farmers. Shipped direct from Baltimore, the cattle were intended to increase dairy herds to provide more milk for Polish children. (See Chapter 376.)

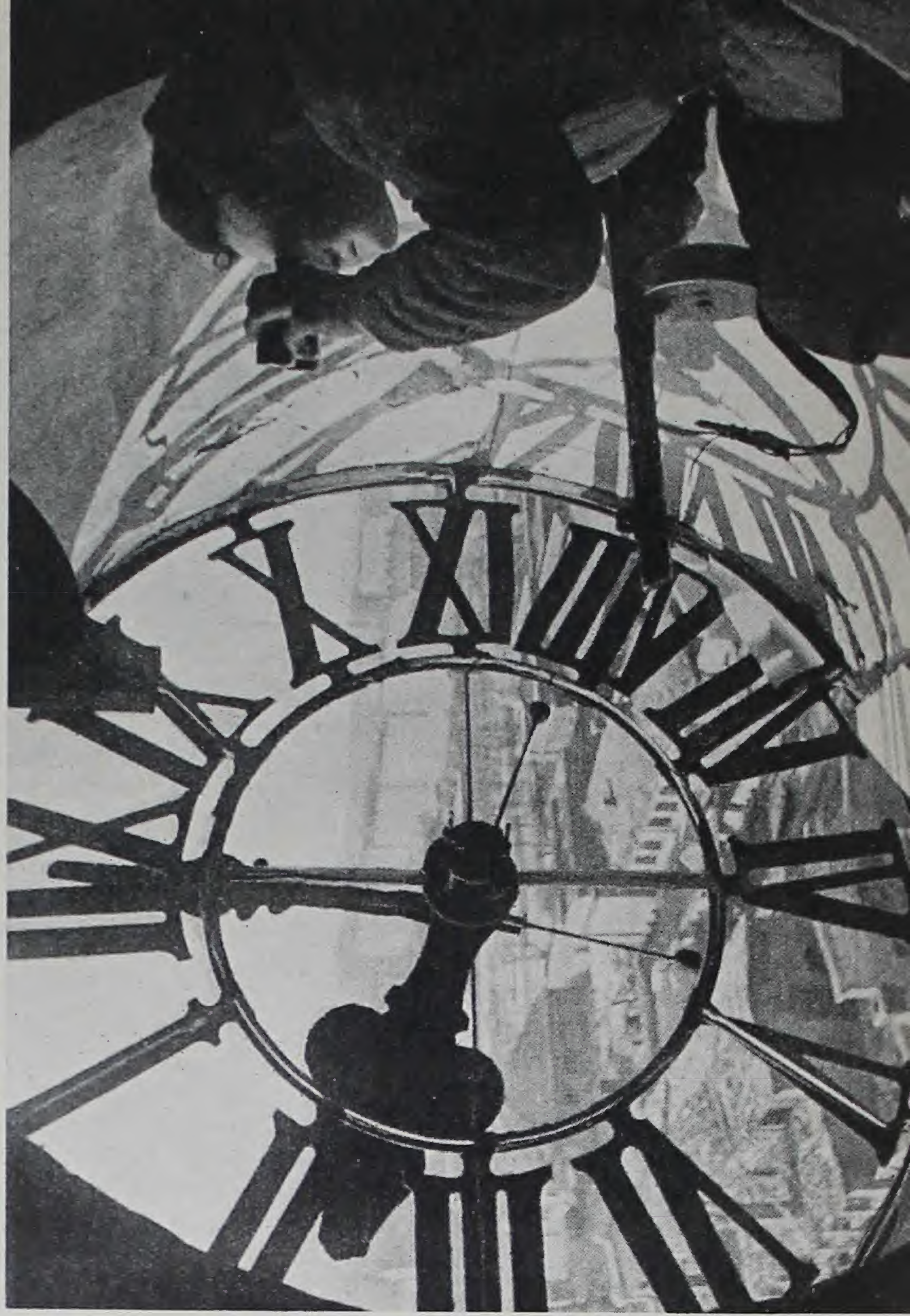
Photo, Associated Press





#### BUDAPEST FALLS AFTER SEVEN WEEKS' SIEGE

The 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Armies, under Marshals Malinovsky and Tolbukhin, completely occupied Budapest, capital of Hungary, on February 13, 1945, after a siege lasting seven weeks. Moscow announced that in the battle for the city the enemy lost over 49,000 in dead and 110,000 in prisoners. Most of the city's finest buildings were destroyed and the Germans blew up the Danube bridges. 1. Soviet self-propelled guns in the streets. 2. Russian gun-crew fire through a hole in a wall. 3. Water from a well in the street: the mains were blown up by the retreating Germans. 4. Soviet artillery observer corrects battery fire from the clock tower of a tall building.





# RED ARMY CONQUERS THREE MORE CAPITALS

*In this chapter, the Military Editor, Major-General Sir Charles Gwynn, concludes the history of Soviet military operations in the Balkans and Central Europe, culminating with the liberation of Prague, which he began in Chapter 340 with the entry of the Red Army into Bessarabia. Simultaneous Red Army victories in Germany are recorded in Chapter 362*

**I**N the last week of 1944 Tolbukhin completed the encirclement of Budapest and, extending his drive northwards on the west bank of the Danube, made contact with Malinovsky's troops about Esztergom on the stretch of the river that runs eastwards from Bratislava and Vienna (see page 3483). The Germans had therefore lost the defence line of the Danube and were threatened with an additional major disaster if the garrison of over 200,000 men in Budapest could not be relieved. But the initial success of Von Rundstedt's Ardennes offensive (see Chapter 336) had been a powerful stimulant to German morale, and even when it became apparent that it had failed to achieve its main object, it seemed probable that it had effectively caused a postponement of a major Allied offensive in the west.

In the first weeks of January the Vistula line was still unbroken and the defence in East Prussia (see Chapter 347)

**Situation on Other Fronts** and in Italy (see Chapter 361) still held; and it is conceivable that, apart from their confidence in the strength of the Vistula position, the Germans may have thought that the Russians in Poland would not resume the offensive until the Western Allies had recovered from the dislocation of their plans caused by Von Rundstedt.

The Germans, therefore, may have felt their general situation to be far from hopeless, and that it might still be possible to retrieve the collapse of the Danube front, or at least to rescue their troops in Budapest from disaster—the most immediate danger.

At any rate, whatever their reasons, the Germans early in January began a series of counter-attacks against Marshal Tolbukhin's Army, which was undoubtedly in a vulnerable situation and could not expect much assistance from Marshal Malinovsky, whose troops were fighting hard on a very wide front.

The somewhat complicated Russian front in Slovakia and Hungary at the end of 1944 was as follows: in the north the southern wing of General Petrov's 4th Ukrainian Army, having cleared the Dukla Pass over the Carpathians, was operating through difficult mountain country towards Presov

and Kosice. On his left Malinovsky's right group was working northwards by the tributaries of the upper Tisza from the Tokaj and Miskolc regions. Farther west Malinovsky was pressing northwards across the upper Ipeľ and the Slovakian frontier in the Lucenec region, the axis of the thrust being apparently the railway leading to Zvolen. All these operations were evidently designed to clear Slovakia, but German resistance here was strong, and though communiqués reported the capture of numerous small places progress was slow.

Farther west again the Russians had cleared the whole of the lower Ipeľ and had established bridge-heads across the Hron near its confluence with the Danube. This was an initial step towards Bratislava; but the immediate objective was evidently Komarno where the main Vienna-Budapest railway skirts the right bank of the Danube. As this railway was the main supply

line for the Germans covering the approaches to Bratislava on both banks of the Danube, their resistance at Komarno was proportionately stubborn. A considerable part of Malinovsky's force was, moreover, still engaged in the fierce street fighting in Pest which, although it yielded a heavy daily toll of German and Hungarian prisoners, made slow house by house progress.

Malinovsky's army, wholly deployed on the left side of the Danube, was therefore protected from major counter-attacks. Tolbukhin, on the other hand, having crossed the river, had no such protection, and might even be pinned against it by a successful counter-attack. Moreover, he had to face in two directions—eastward towards Buda in order to tighten his hold on the city and to prevent a break-out, and westward to meet any attempt to rescue the

**Russians Draw Nearer to Bratislava**



**LAKE BALATON BARRED SOVIET APPROACH TO VIENNA**

A rapid advance by the 3rd Ukrainian Army on December 5, 1944, brought it to Lake Balaton, the great shallow lake guarding the south-eastern approaches to Vienna. At each end of the lake the Russians encountered stiff resistance, and it was not until March 24, 1945, that they broke through the enemy positions at the north end of the lake to make substantial progress towards the Austrian frontier. Here a German motor-boat patrol is seen on the lake.





### LAST BATTLES IN HUNGARY'S CAPITAL

In Budapest on February 13, 1945, all organized resistance ceased after the Royal Palace and its park had been cleared. In the final stages the enemy clung tenaciously to the Government buildings from which they had to be ejected floor by floor. Above, the Pest end of the demolished Elizabeth bridge, which once spanned the Danube. Left, Marshal Malinovsky greets officers in Budapest on the Red Army's 27th anniversary, February 23, 1945. *Photos, Pictorial Press*

ways to Buda developed, led by the S.S. Viking and S.S. Totenkopf Divisions, who made attack after attack in an effort to find a weak spot in the Soviet defences.

By January 7 Tolbukhin was forced to evacuate Esztergom, and for the remainder of the month Russian communiqués spoke of counter-attacks repelled on this front and farther south towards Szekesfehervar. The weight of the counter-attacks increased, and on January 23 it was admitted that Szekesfehervar, which the Russians had captured after desperate fighting a month earlier, had also been evacuated.

In these counter-attacks, which developed into what amounted to a counter-offensive on a considerable scale, the Germans employed powerful armoured forces, having drawn strong reinforcements from the west. It is now known that, as soon as it was realized that Rundstedt's coup had failed in its main object, the greater part of his armour, which had lost heavily, was withdrawn, and one of his two panzer armies was dispatched to the Hungarian front. It is difficult to understand why a reserve which would have proved so valuable for defence of the Rhineland or in Poland should thus have been diverted to a theatre of less importance. Possibly the German High Command considered that the immense air superiority of the Allies

in the west had deprived armoured reserves of their offensive potentialities, or that the situation there had been sufficiently stabilized to eliminate danger for a period long enough to admit of an effective counter-stroke on the Danube front. It is possible, too, that by the time the implications of the Russian Vistula offensive in January (see Chapter 347) were realized, it was too late to change the direction of the transfer movement.

A third possibility is that, with the collapse of the Vistula front, the proposal to make a final stand in south Germany was seriously considered at Hitler's headquarters. For that course, it was imperative to close effectively the avenue leading to the "Southern Redoubt" by the Danube valley. The reason for the decision to make such a wasteful use of reserves, especially the continuance of the counter-offensive after it had failed to achieve any outstanding initial success and even after the fall of Budapest, is still a matter of intriguing speculation, but it must certainly rank as one of the major mistaken decisions taken by the German High Command. Tolbukhin was for a time hard pressed and had to give ground; but the ring round Budapest remained unbroken and the Germans,

**Protection for  
'Southern  
Redoubt'**

encircled city. In addition a substantial part of Tolbukhin's army was far away, holding the passage between the south end of Lake Balaton and the Drava and maintaining contact with Marshal Tito's forces.

During the first days of January Tolbukhin was chiefly engaged in operations against Buda and in some heavy fighting to the south-west of the city, where in the hilly country of the Bakony Forest there were strong German groups whose presence weakened the connexion he had established with Malinovsky at Esztergom. It was this connexion that the first German counter-attacks aimed at breaking, and about January 3 a drive from Komarno towards Esztergom and along the rail-





right group launched an offensive (announced on January 24) on a considerable scale with success north of Miskolc, but from about February 18 his force west of the Hron facing towards Bratislava had to repel strong German infantry and tank counter-attacks in the Komarno neighbourhood, and fierce fighting continued in this area well on into March, though apparently without much change of positions. On March 1, however, Malinovsky made some gains in the forested hills west of Lucenec, and by March 14 reached and captured Zvolen. Petrov also continued to make progress, but on the whole during March fighting was of a local character with the Germans constantly counter-attacking, probably in hopes of disturbing Russian preparations for a resumption of a general offensive. The counter-attacks extended to the south of Lake Balaton, and on March 24 one of them succeeded in establishing a small footing across the Drava, only to be driven back by a prompt counter-stroke.

#### Slow Progress in Slovakia

On that date, however, the situation began to change rapidly, for in an Order of the Day Moscow announced that Tolbukhin, having repulsed the attacks of eleven German tank divisions southwest of Budapest and worn the enemy out in defensive fighting, had resumed the offensive and advanced 44 miles on a 60-mile front, recapturing Szekesfehervar and a number of other places. On the following day, it was announced that Malinovsky had also passed to the

exhausted by their efforts, were left without adequate reserves when forced to adopt a defensive attitude.

The recapture of Szekesfehervar proved to be the high-water mark of the enemy counter-offensive, and though hard fighting continued it did not relieve the heavy pressure maintained by both Tolbukhin and Malinovsky on the beleaguered garrison of Budapest. As early as January 18 Malinovsky had gained full possession of Pest, and on February 13 all resistance in Buda ceased with the surrender of Colonel-General Pfeffer-Wildenbruch. During the siege, which had lasted seven weeks, some 50,000 German and Hungarian troops had been killed and 110,000

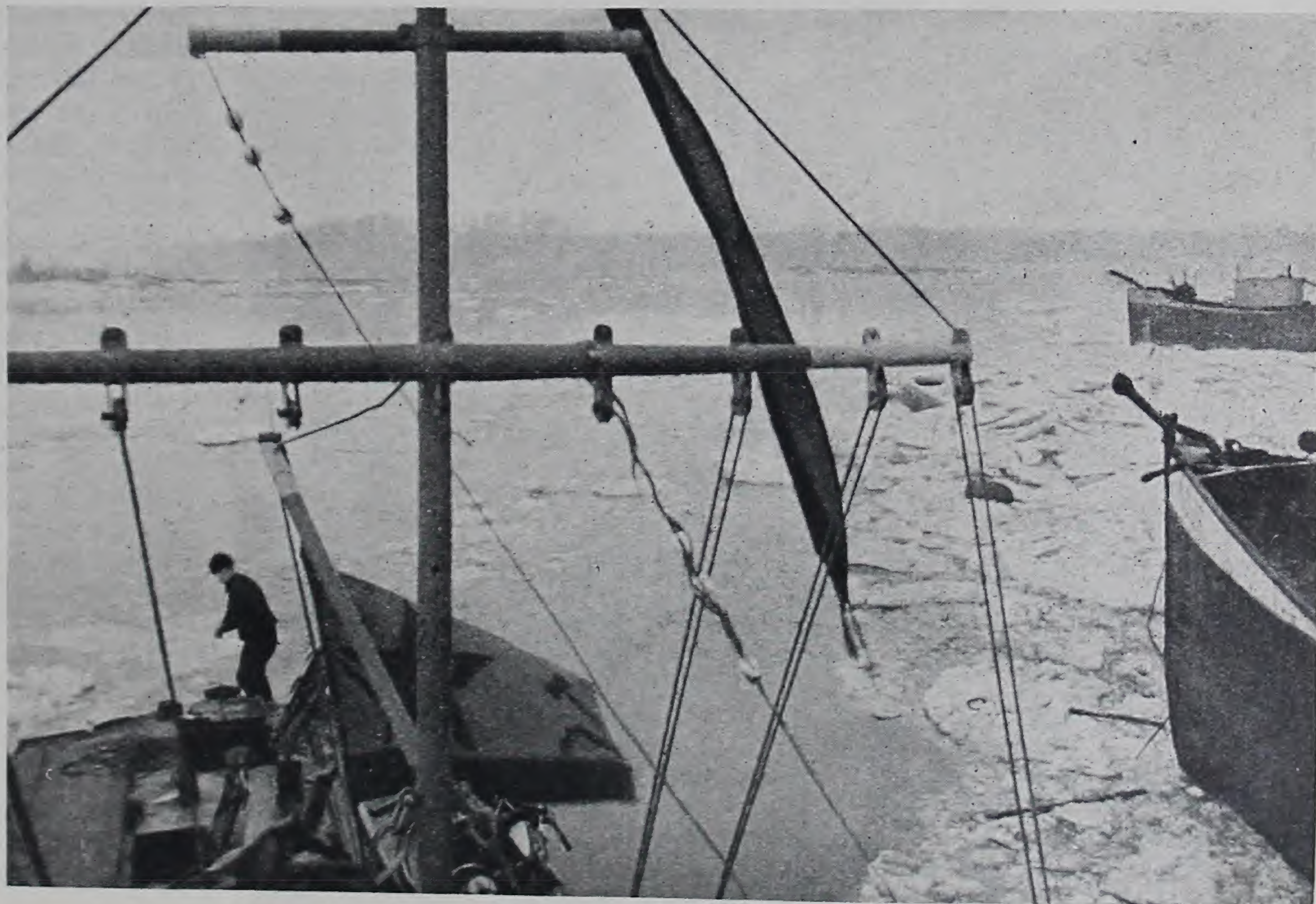
made prisoner. A few parties that had escaped into the woods to the northwest remained to be mopped up, but the fall of the city left Tolbukhin free to prepare for new operations and removed a block on his most direct line of communications.

Meanwhile, operations in Slovakia had been proceeding steadily if slowly. On January 20 Petrov (see pages 3555 and 3558) captured Presov and Kosice, and about the same time Malinovsky's

#### THE DANUBE FLOTILLA

On March 25, 1945, the Soviet Danube Flotilla helped in the recapture of Esztergom, north-west of Budapest. In the same area Soviet sailors, near Baitz, captured German shipping with valuable war material. Manoeuvring in the ice, a Russian monitor here hauls some of the enemy ships from their haven to a Russian base.

Photo, Pictorial Press



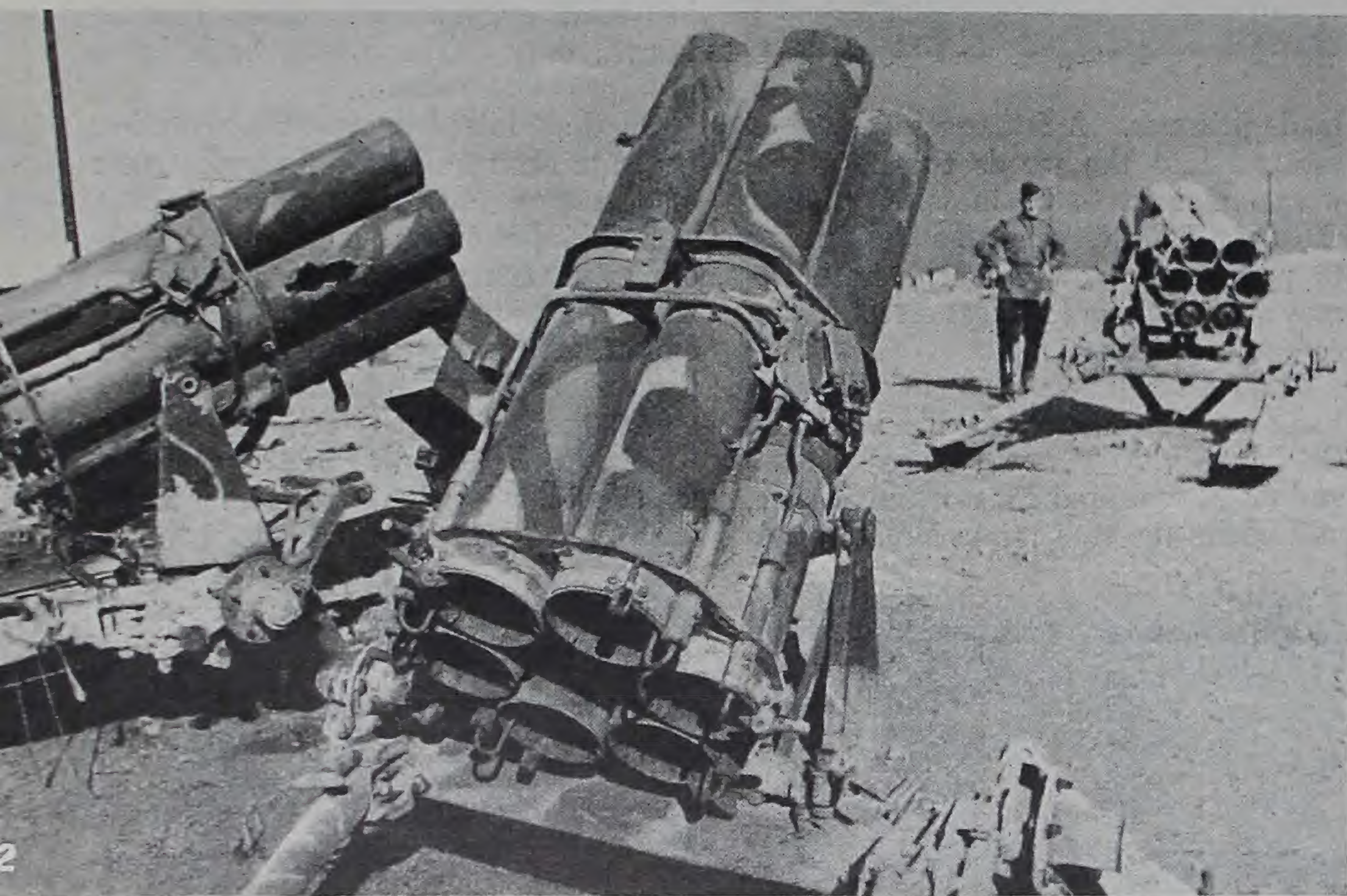




### TOLBUKHIN'S TROOPS FREE AUSTRIA

The liberation of Austria by the 3rd Ukrainian Army, under Marshal Tolbukhin, began on April 1, 1945, when the Russians captured Mattersburg, south-east of Wiener-Neustadt. Twelve days later Vienna, the capital, fell. 1. Soviet troops enter Kirchschlag, set ablaze by the retreating enemy. 2. German six-barrel mortars captured on the Austro-Hungarian frontier. 3. Freed Russian girls in Austria greet their liberators.

*Photos, Pictorial Press*



offensive, and, utilizing units of the Danube naval flotilla, had retaken Esztergom and advanced 30 miles.

By March 26 Tolbukhin had captured Papa and other towns where the Germans were attempting to hold the roads leading to the Austrian frontier, and Malinovsky had captured Banska Bystrica (see page 3209) north of Zvolen in the heart of Slovakia. By then Tolbukhin had also taken the offensive south of Lake Balaton and was making rapid progress. On all these fronts German resistance was breaking down and losses in tanks were heavy.

Tolbukhin crossed the Raba River on March 28 and Malinovsky, now operating in strength on the south bank of the Danube, on the same day captured Komarom (opposite Komarno) and the important centre of Győr on the Lower Raba. Tolbukhin, on March 29, reached the

**Attack  
Towards  
Vienna**

Austrian border, capturing Kőszeg and other frontier towns. Malinovsky's offensive now began to develop on the north as well as the south bank of the river, and by March 30 it had overcome all resistance in the Hron area and crossed the Nyitra, which joins the Danube at Komarno. This thrust was clearly aimed at Bratislava; while that south of the Danube was directed towards the approaches to Vienna between Lake Neusiedl and the river.

Tolbukhin's main force at this time was also making progress round the south of Lake Neusiedl, and on April 1 captured the important town of Sopron. Farther south, his left wing, composed partly of Bulgarian troops, achieved a notable success by overcoming determined German resistance in the oil district to the south-west of Lake Balaton, the town of Nagy Kanisza, centre of the field, being captured on April 2. This oilfield had been greatly developed during the war and was virtually the last source of natural oil the Germans possessed. Tolbukhin was also pressing forward towards Graz, and on March 31 captured Szent-Gotthard near the Austrian frontier on the Graz railway.

Also on March 31, north of the Danube, Malinovsky forced a crossing over the river Vag and entered Trnava, on the railway leading to Bratislava from the north-east. South of the Danube his left continued to make progress, capturing the road centre of Magyar Ovar on April 3, and on that day his right group entered Kremnica.

The Germans were still fighting stubbornly, but it was evident that nowhere were they able to halt the Soviet advance, which was now closely threatening both Bratislava and Vienna. On





### IN THE CARPATHIANS

On the southern slopes of the Carpathians General Petrov's 4th Ukrainian Army, advancing south from the Dukla Pass, captured Presov and Kosice on January 20, 1945. Large-scale progress was hampered throughout the month of March as the result of determined enemy counter-attacks. Above, Red Army troops march through a Carpathian town. Right, Soviet observers on the look-out from a tree-top.



April 4 Malinovsky stormed Bratislava, capital of Slovakia, and simultaneously, to the north of it, crossed the Little Carpathians, thus opening the way into the Morava valley, and for an advance to Vienna from the north-east. Tolbukhin, having captured the great industrial centre of Wiener Neustadt on April 3, was rapidly approaching the Austrian capital from the south. The whole of Hungary had by now been overrun, and presumably the Germans could no longer count on Hungarian assistance, nor was it probable that they would receive much support from the inhabitants of Austria.

By April 5 Malinovsky, south of the Danube, had cleared the country between the river and Lake Neusiedl, capturing Bruck, while Tolbukhin had not only reached the suburbs of Vienna, but, working round to the west, had cut the Vienna-Linz road leading to the upper Danube valley.

On April 8, following the Red Army invasion of Austria, the Soviet Government issued a declaration disclaiming

any hostility to the Austrians and confirming their previously announced intention of liberating the country. Two days earlier Tolbukhin appealed to the people of Vienna not to evacuate the city, but to hinder German sabotage and prevent the Germans from using the city's buildings as centres of resistance.

Although Baldur von Shirach recruited some Austrian Volkssturm battalions and the German troops fought desperately in Vienna, there is no doubt that the inhabitants of the city did greet the Russians as liberators, and the murder of Colonel-General Sepp Dietrich, the German commander, by revolver shots fired at him point blank on April 5, was significant of popular sentiments. Dietrich, ordered by Hitler to hold the city to the last, had attempted to organize defences, forcing the inhabitants to dig trenches and construct concrete pill boxes. But defensive works are of little avail if troops with a will to fight are not available in adequate numbers to hold them; and by this time the German losses had been crushing and

cohesion had gone. Street fighting developed but only in places was it determined, Russian progress being made easier by the refusal of the citizens to obey Dietrich's orders to close their doors.

The Germans made a final attempt to rally in the northern part of the city, but Malinovsky's advance across the Morava, threatening their line of retreat, dislodged them, and the liberation of the city by Tolbukhin's 3rd Ukrainian Army, in co-operation with troops of the 2nd Ukrainian Army, was announced on April 13. Much booty was abandoned by the enemy, who had run out of petrol, and many aircraft were found abandoned on the airfields.

While fighting in Vienna was still in progress, Tolbukhin was also pressing west on both banks of the Danube. By April 15 he had reached St. Pölten on the south side, 28 miles west of Vienna, and on the north side he captured Wagram and many other places on the

**Vienna Freed  
from the  
Germans**





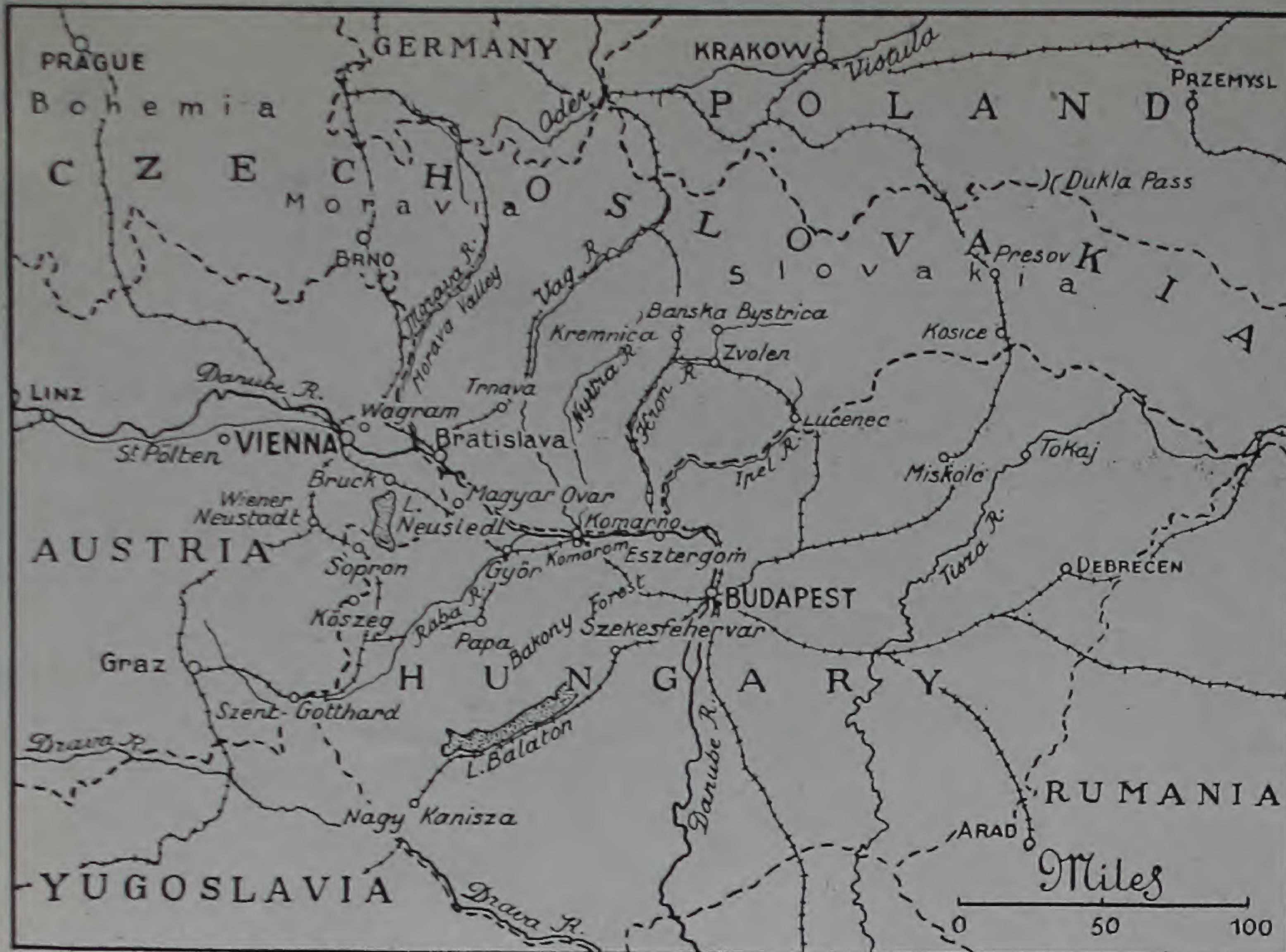
### AUSTRIA'S CAPITAL FREED FROM THE GERMANS

After stubborn fighting, Vienna fell to units drawn from the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Armies, under Marshal Tolbukhin, on April 13, 1945. The Red Army captured 130,000 prisoners in the battle for the city and its approaches which began on March 16. Soviet claims included the rout of eleven German tank divisions, including the 6th S.S. Tank Army, the destruction or capture of 1,345 tanks and self-propelled guns, and 2,250 field-guns. In Vienna the Russians applied new tactics, moving through courtyards and breaking down walls instead of advancing along the streets. 1. German barricades in the Mariahilferstrasse. 2. Soviet tank crew in the outskirts. 3. Red Army troops outside the Parliament buildings in the Ringstrasse.

4A<sup>2</sup>







### BATTLEGROUND OF CENTRAL EUROPE

This map illustrates the last stages of the Red Army's campaign in the Carpathians, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Austria, which ended with the relief of the patriots in Prague on May 10, two days after the signing by the Germans of the final act of surrender in Berlin (see Historic Document CCXCVI, page 3640). Other capitals taken on this front during the fighting in 1945 included Budapest, occupied on February 13 after a seven weeks' siege; and Vienna, taken after stubborn fighting on April 13.

following day. His left wing meanwhile was making progress towards Graz, although the advance here does not appear to have been violently pressed. Malinovsky similarly was making good progress both in Austria north of Vienna, and in the centre of Czechoslovakia, where the great industrial town of Brno, capital of Moravia, was captured on April 26.

Thus, before the Oder front collapsed about April 19 under Zhukov's final offensive (see Chapter 362), the project

of prolonging resistance in the "Southern Redoubt" Made Impracticable Redoubt had been made impracticable.

Malinovsky in Czechoslovakia and upper Austria and Tolbukhin in the Danube valley formed an anvil on which the hammer blows of the American 3rd and 7th Armies were due to fall, crushing all communications between northern and southern Germany.

The situation of the Germans in Italy and Yugoslavia had been made equally hopeless, even had they succeeded in resisting Field-Marshal Alexander's and Marshal Tito's offensives. Only in Bohemia did Field-Marshal Schörner make a short-lived attempt to continue the fight when the Nazi edifice finally collapsed in the first week of May, but he was unable to prevent the liberation of Prague by the Red Army on May 10, after a fierce five-day street battle costing 5,000 civilian lives between

Czechoslovak patriots and the German occupying forces.

Malinovsky and Tolbukhin, even though their offensive had not ended with the sensational surrender en masse of the enemy opposing them, had well earned the Order of Victory awarded to them by the President of the Supreme Soviet on April 26. No other group of armies of the Allies could claim such a number of capital cities captured or liberated—Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade, Budapest, Vienna and Prague.

But reviewing the campaign as a whole, even more remarkable is the way their operations, almost completely separated from the main theatre by the barrier of the Carpathians, fitted into and synchronized with the development of the Allied plans. Yet it was a long slogging offensive, much of it through very difficult country and under unfavourable weather conditions. The brilliant victory over Von Kleist in Bessarabia (see page 3475) and its rapid exploitation gave the offensive a wonderful start and achieved results of immense importance, political and economic. Malinovsky's dash to Bucharest (see pages 3475-76) deprived Germany of her chief source of natural oil, gave the necessary support to King Michael's coup d'état and secured the by no means negligible co-operation of the Rumanian Army. Tolbukhin's rapid advance into Bulgaria (see page 3476) brought her to heel at a time when she was still offering

obstinate resistance to demands for her withdrawal from Greek territory. Forced to change sides, she not only ceased to be a menace to Marshal Tito, but her troops substantially contributed to the liberation of Belgrade (see page 3481).

Malinovsky's manoeuvre to by-pass the defile at the Iron Gate (see page 3479) and his rapid advance into Hungary as far as the Danube were further notable examples of how success can be exploited, but there followed a long-drawn-out struggle in northern Transylvania and north-west Hungary. This involved hard and continuous fighting before Malinovsky's well-conceived wheel to the north between the Danube and the Tisza separated the Axis forces in the north-east from the army committed to the defence of Budapest and the Danube line.

Yet even then it appeared that the Danube would prove an insuperable obstacle barring the way into western Hungary and Austria. Tolbukhin's crossing of the river (see page 3482) was therefore not only a feat of great tactical merit, but a strategical manoeuvre of decisive importance. Exploited rapidly and boldly, it resulted in the complete encirclement of Budapest.

**Decisive  
Danube  
Crossing**

In attempts to retrieve the situation the Germans committed some of their most effective remaining reserves, badly as they were needed elsewhere—possibly they were tempted by Tolbukhin's exposed position and had hopes of achieving a sensational success. But against Tolbukhin's stubborn defence the German counter-offensive exhausted itself, and when he resumed the offensive only a shattered army barred his way to Vienna. It was a notable example of Russian ability to pass rapidly from attack to defence and then to attack again, and the defeat of the German counter-offensive was probably of even greater importance than the capture of Budapest, for its effects were felt in the whole theatre of war.

The capture of Vienna and the link-up with the Americans (see Chapter 369) and Alexander's troops (see Chapter 361) followed almost automatically, but it was a fitting end to a remarkable campaign. Seldom can operations in what was in some respects a subsidiary theatre have produced such great results, or have induced the enemy to make such curious mistakes. A remarkable feature of the campaign was the admirable co-ordination of Malinovsky's and Tolbukhin's operations; at times their immediate objectives were widely separated, but at the decisive moment and place their main efforts coalesced perfectly.



**March 1.** Capture of München-Gladbach and Rheydt by U.S. 9th Army disclosed; U.S. 3rd Army took Oberzerf (Saar River). Over 1,200 U.S.A. 8th A.F. "heavies" attacked Baden and Württemberg; by night, R.A.F. bombed Berlin. U.S. troops landed on Palawan (Philippines). Iran declared war on Japan; Saudi Arabia on Germany and Japan.

**March 2.** German 15th Army in retreat across the Rhine; announced that U.S. 9th Army had captured Krefeld, Venlo and Roermond and was on the Rhine opposite Düsseldorf; U.S. 3rd Army took Trier; British troops with 1st Canadian Army took Weeze on the Niers. R.A.F. struck heavily at Cologne, gave Berlin its eleventh successive nightly raid. U.S. forces seized Lubang Island (Philippines).

**March 3.** R.A.F. breached Dortmund-Ems canal at Ladbergen (night). Red Army captured Pollnow (Pomerania). Marianas-based Super-Fortresses bombed Tokyo. Japanese forces on Iwo Jima cut in two. For the first time since June 1944, piloted aircraft bombed Britain.

**March 4.** 1st and 2nd White Russian Armies reached Baltic, isolating vast German forces from the Kolberg area to the E. Prussian border. Announced that Australians on Bougainville had cleared Downs Ridge.

**March 5.** R.A.F. heavily bombed oil plants near Leipzig. First White Russian Army captured Stargard, Naugard and Polzin; Red Air Force attacked Königsberg and Stettin. Four-fifths of Iwo Jima in U.S. hands.

**March 6.** U.S. 1st Army captured Cologne. Second White Russian Army took Polish city of Grudziadz (Graudenz).

**March 7.** U.S. 3rd Army reached Rhine N.W. of Coblenz. R.A.F. heavily bombed Dessau (night). Russians took Starogard (in former Polish Corridor). Fourteenth Army captured Madaya and Pakokku (Upper Burma); Chinese 1st Army occupied Old Lashio.

**March 8.** U.S. 1st Army captured Rhine bridge at Remagen. "Heavies" of the U.S.A. 8th A.F. attacked Dortmund and Gelsenkirchen in strength; R.A.F. bombed Hamburg and Berlin. Nineteenth Division entered outskirts of Mandalay; Chinese captured New Lashio.

**March 9.** U.S. troops took Bonn; British forces captured Xanten. Second White Russian Army seized Stolp (N. Pomerania) to complete encirclement of Danzig. Marianas-based Super-Fortresses heavily bombed Tokyo. U.S. troops landed on Mindanao (Philippines).

**March 10.** Germans withdrew from Wesel bridge-head, blowing up Wesel bridges. Russians captured Lauenburg and Kartuzy, near Danzig.

**March 11.** West bank of Rhine, from Nijmegen to the Moselle in Alsace, under Allied control. R.A.F. heavily bombed Essen by day; Berlin received its 20th consecutive night raid. Marianas-based Super-Fortresses attacked Nagoya. Dr. Benes and his Government left London for Slovakia.

**March 12.** R.A.F. Lancasters and Halifaxes made heaviest attack of the war to date at Dortmund. Russians captured Kistrzin on the Oder.

**March 13.** U.S.A. 15th A.F. bombed Regensburg area (Bavaria). Heavy attack by Marianas-based Super-Fortresses on Osaka. Maymyo (Burma) captured; British 36th Division took Mong Mit (Shan States).

**March 14.** U.S.A. 8th A.F. heavily bombed Hanover and the Ruhr; R.A.F. demolished Bielefeld viaducts, using 10-ton "Grand Slam" bomb for the first time. Russians captured Zvolen in Czechoslovakia. U.S.A. 15th A.F. and Soviet bombers, fighting together for the first time, simultaneously attacked Novy Zamky (Slovakia). U.S. troops land on Bomblon and Simara (Philippines).

**March 14-15.** Norwegian Commando force, trained in Britain, seriously disrupted enemy communications in Norway.

**March 15.** U.S.A. 8th A.F. bombed German General Staff H.Q. at Zossen, 20 miles S. of Berlin; R.A.F. attacked Gestapo H.Q. at Copenhagen. Russians took Griefenhagen, S. of Stettin. Kobe (Japan) heavily bombed by U.S. Super-Fortresses. All Iwo Jima in U.S. hands.

**March 17.** U.S.A. 8th A.F. heavily bombed Leipzig, Dresden and Hanover areas; by night R.A.F. attacked Berlin. Two German destroyers sunk off Corsica by H.M. destroyers "Lookout" and "Meteor." Rangoon bombed.

**March 18.** U.S. 3rd Army captured Coblenz. Over 1,300 U.S.A. 8th A.F. Liberators and Fortresses bombed Berlin by daylight. First White Russian Army took Kolberg, Baltic seaport. U.S.A. 15th A.F. attacked communications in Yugoslavia, Austria and Hungary. U.S. carrier-based aircraft struck heavily at Japanese Fleet in the Inland Sea. Queen Wilhelmina visited Netherlands.

**March 19.** U.S.A. 8th A.F. bombed jet-plane plant at Baumenheim (N. of Augsburg); R.A.F. destroyed Arnsberg viaduct, near Hamm, with 22,000-lb. bombs. British 2nd Division captured Ava (Burma); other 14th Army troops took Amarapura. U.S. forces landed on Panay (Philippines).

**March 20.** German resistance collapsed W. of the Rhine; Saarbrücken, Zweibrücken, Kaiserslautern and Worms captured; Mainz overrun. Red Army took Braunsberg (E. Prussia) and Altdamm on the Oder. British recaptured Mandalay; British 36th Division took Mogok. Capture of But airfield, New Guinea, by Australians announced.

**March 21.** U.S. 3rd Army captured Ludwigshaven. R.A.F. Mosquitoes scored direct hits on Gestapo H.Q. in Copenhagen. U.S. forces captured Iloilo (Panay) and San Fernando (Luzon).

**March 22.** Heavy Allied air attacks on enemy communications leading to the Lower Rhine; announced that Field-Marshal von Rundstedt had been replaced by Field-Marshal Kesselring as German C-in-C. in the West. First Ukrainian Army opened offensive in Upper Silesia, S.W. of Oppeln, capturing Neustadt on Czechoslovak border. Rangoon bombed.

**March 22-23 (night).** U.S. 3rd Army established solid bridge-head across the Rhine, S. of Mainz.

**March 23.** U.S. 3rd Army captured Speyer; heavy Allied air attacks on

enemy front on the Lower Rhine. R.A.F. Lancasters dropped 22,000-lb. bombs on rail bridge across the Weser at Bremen. Russians took Zoppot, between Danzig and Gdynia. U.S. "heavies" bombed Formosa.

**March 23-24.** U.S. carrier-based aircraft heavily attacked Ryukyu Islands.

**March 24.** Twenty-First Army crossings of the Rhine, north of the Ruhr, in great strength; British 6th and U.S. 17th Airborne Divisions dropped behind E. bank of the river. U.S.A. 15th A.F., based in Italy, bombed Berlin for the first time. Third Ukrainian Army went over to the offensive S.W. of Budapest, recapturing Szekesfehervar, Veszprem, and Zirc. Firewatching duties abolished in the United Kingdom.

**March 25.** Mr. Churchill and Field-Marshal Montgomery crossed the Rhine and visited British troops in newly won areas. U.S. 3rd Army captured Darmstadt; Ludwigshaven cleared. Russians retook Esztergom; seized Heiligenbeil, last enemy defence point on the Frisches Haff; Red Air Force heavily bombed Danzig. In Burma 14th Army captured Kume and Langwa.

**March 26.** U.S. 3rd Army, entering Bavaria, penetrated Aschaffenburg and seized bridge across the Main. Russians captured Banska-Bystrica (Slovakia) and Papa (Hungary); Red Air Force bombed Danzig in strength. Fourteenth Army took Myittha on the Mandalay-Rangoon railway. U.S. troops made new landing on Cebu (Philippines).

**March 27.** All organized resistance on 21st Army Group front ceased; U.S. 7th Army crossed Rhine N. of Mannheim. R.A.F. attacked U-boat pens at Vegesack (Bremen) with 10-ton bombs. Russians captured 14 suburbs of Danzig. Super-Fortresses attacked Kyushu; U.S. aircraft and warships pounded Ryukyus. Last V-2 fell in England, at Orpington, Kent.

**March 28.** Tanks of the U.S. 1st Army entered Giessen, N. of Frankfurt-on-Main; U.S. 3rd Army took Wiesbaden and Aschaffenburg. 2nd White Russian Army captured Gdynia; other Soviet forces took Győr on the Raba River and Komárom on the Danube. Cebu City (Philippines) occupied. Australian capture of Dagua (New Guinea) announced.

**March 29.** Mannheim surrendered to U.S. 7th Army; 21st Army Group offensive from the Lower Rhine bridge-head began at dawn. Third Ukrainian Army reached the Austrian border, captured Kőszeg.

**March 30.** Americans captured Heidelberg and Frankfurt-on-Main. U.S.A. 8th A.F. heavily bombed Hamburg, Bremen, and Wilhelmshaven. Second White Russian Army captured Danzig. Super-Fortresses bombed Nagoya.

**March 31.** U.S. 7th Army crossed Tauber River, E. of Darmstadt; French 1st Army crossed Rhine in the Speyer area. General Eisenhower called on the Wehrmacht to surrender. R.A.F. bombed U-boat yards at Hamburg. Russians captured Ratibor (Silesia) and Szent-Gotthard (Hungary); crossed Vag River (S. Slovakia). British Fleet attacked the Saki Islands (Ryukyus).



# NAZI GERMANY'S DEATH STRUGGLES

*Dr. Frederik Heymann, formerly of the editorial staff of the 'Frankfurter Zeitung' and foreign editor of 'Bohemia' (Prague), here describes the last four months of the Nazis' 'Thousand-Year Empire.' Despite the certainty of defeat felt by the majority of the German people, Nazi propaganda carried on to the end its efforts to flog them into continued resistance. The internal history of Germany during 1944 is given in Chapter 313 ; that of the months following the surrender in Chapter 380*

**I**N the two years following Stalin-grad, the Germans had become accustomed to gloom. New Year's Day 1945, however, surpassed in its dark forebodings all its predecessors. An overwhelming majority of Germans had, by this time, become conscious of the fact that the war was lost, and their only hope was that it would not drag on too long. But staunch Nazis still pretended to believe in victory, and Germany's military propaganda tried to make the most of the temporary successes of Rundstedt's Ardennes offensive. Hitler in his New Year message went so far as to claim that "the climax of the war has been passed," and that further German counter-strokes would break the will of the enemy. At the same time, he deplored the desertion of Germany's "treacherous Allies." He reminded his followers again that the failure of the attempt on his life on July 20, 1944 (see page 3168), had shown the hand of Providence, and ended up by telling the German people that they could not possibly be defeated—either by military weapons or by the time factor.

In reality, Germany's "counter-stroke" had already spent its force. By the middle of January it became clear even to the most hopeful Nazis that Rundstedt's offensive

**Defeat on Both Fronts** had been abortive and that, at the very best, it had achieved a slight delay of the Western Allies' push into Germany. The last great Russian offensive had already begun, and by its terrible power and swiftness succeeded in shifting the front in one single, uninterrupted move from the Vistula to the Oder.

After the destruction she had suffered from the air, Germany now became—for the first time since the Napoleonic wars—a vast battlefield, and the names of unquestionably German towns and cities such as Königsberg, Breslau, Glogau and Liegnitz appeared in the reports of the German High Command and of war correspondents, every one of them allegedly a fortress, heroically defended not only by the army but by the entire population. At the same time

the Germans were told that strong counter-measures were in preparation, that the Russians, by pushing their centre forward in the direction of Berlin with their flanks still far back to the east, had put themselves in a most dangerous position which the German High Command would certainly use to its best advantage, though details of these plans had, of course, to remain secret. Hints of this sort continued to be dropped for weeks, even at a time when the German armies to the north of the huge Russian wedge had been wiped out or confined within small pockets of resistance along the Baltic Sea (see Chapter 347).

Actually there was never a chance that these counter-measures would be taken. Most of the German effectives still available as fighting reserves in the winter of 1944-45 had already been in action in the course of the Rundstedt offensive. Those remnants of mobile

Panzer formations that had escaped destruction in Belgium and could theoretically be transferred to the east were much too weak to stave off disaster, and Allied air-raids, to which the weakened Luftwaffe had no strength to reply, made this transfer itself a slow, costly, inefficient undertaking.

In striking contrast to what had still been achieved in 1944, the measures now being taken to mobilize new forces showed all the symptoms of a desperate makeshift. **More Women Called to Factories** An attempt was made to free still more German workers from the war factories by putting women in their places, and a certain amount of propaganda was put out to persuade women who could not undertake a full day's work in a factory to accept at least half-day jobs. Men who had contagious diseases like tuberculosis were put to work, as were war invalids, including the blind. When



## COLLAPSE OF THE GERMAN SOLDIER'S MORALE

So low had morale fallen that on November 21, 1944, all German soldiers were required to take a new vow, of faith in Nazism. Left, a declaration issued by Hitler to all troops, printed on ersatz vellum: 'After the end of this war I shall return as a still more fanatical National Socialist than before.' Right, Wehrmacht troops take the new oath 'to die for Hitler and Nazism.'

*Photo, Pictorial Press*





### DESPERATION GRIPS THE GERMAN HOME FRONT

The winter of 1944-45 brought the bitter realities of war home to the German people. 1. Outside Berlin, reserves drawn from youth organizations are trained in musketry. 2. As the Allies drew nearer to the Reich capital, Army field bakeries in the fighting areas had to serve civilians as well as soldiers. 3. Girls train for Luftwaffe duties—part of the drive to press into war service all available German women.

*Photos, Pictorial Press ; Associated Press ; Keystone*



more and more factories were put out of production by air-raids and it became impossible to shift the workers from one place to another, an attempt was made to "loosen up" the whole system of manpower direction by concentrating all the manpower available in one town or city on work in those factories that had escaped damage or could be put into a state of repair within a short time.

The damage inflicted on the German communications system by Allied air-raids was clearly reflected in a number of measures. Travelling by train, already severely curtailed, was now limited to the minimum. On January 23 all public travel by express trains was disallowed, and all existing travel permits were cancelled. Express trains were run, in very limited numbers only, for military and government personnel. This measure was followed by an order forbidding the sending of letters and parcels except locally. From one town to another, only open postcards might be sent, to save weight and time taken in censorship. From January 30 onwards, newspapers, except for special occasions and Sunday issues, appeared as single sheets with two printed pages only.

Two other fields in which transport difficulties became particularly obvious were the distribution of fuel and food. Coal and wood were rationed more strictly and people were advised to help each other by joining in "warmth co-operatives," that is, to heat only a small number of rooms in each block of flats and use these as living-rooms for all the inhabitants. On February 3 the Government announced that the rations for periods 72 and 73 would have to suffice for nine instead of eight weeks. A month later even this decision was revoked, and the whole system of food distribution was made "more elastic"; hitherto centrally directed, it was now to be carried out according to stores and reserves available in each district. This "decentralization" was one more symptom of the fact that the whole machine of administration in unoccupied Germany was quickly falling to pieces.

This process had only started when, in the night of January 30, Hitler publicly addressed the German people for the last time. It was the occasion of the twelfth anniversary of the "Third Reich." It was obvious enough that this empire, which had been hailed as "das Tausendjaehrige Reich" (the thousand years' empire) by its ardent followers, had not another year to live, and some anti-Nazis had started to call





### IT WAS 1940—IN REVERSE

On January 28, 1945, the German News Agency admitted that millions of German men, women and children were crowding the Eastern roads—a mass migration without precedent in conditions of deepest winter and biting frost. It was 1940—in reverse, and in bad instead of good weather (see illus. in pages 1396, 1535, 1551). Top, British troops issue military rations left by the retreating Germans in a newly won Rhineland town to 'displaced persons' (Russians, Poles, French and Dutch). In circle, German refugees watch a heavy U.S. trailer rumble through the streets of Saarbrücken. Right, road-jam of refugees fleeing before the advancing Russians. Photos, British & U.S. Official.







### STAMPS AS PROPAGANDA

These newly designed postage stamps were included in German propaganda for the Home Front in late 1944. Left, a stamp to commemorate the founding of the Volkssturm in October 1944: it depicts three generations springing to arms. Right, issue intended to convince the German people of the effectiveness of rocket-warfare.

it "das Dutzendjaehrige Reich" (the dozen years' empire). Hitler himself had not been heard of for quite a time, and again and again rumours were spread that he was no longer alive or had left Germany. So he decided to prove the contrary and to restore the steadily sinking morale of his party followers by giving a speech over the radio. (Two days before, he received the last "statesman" whom the Germans called an ally — Vidkun Quisling, "Prime Minister" of the so-called Norwegian Government.)

As there was no single fact Hitler could have mentioned as being in any way a basis for hope, he avoided the realm of facts altogether. He claimed, without bothering about logic, that the victory achieved by the Nazi movement in Germany in 1933 was in itself a guarantee for final victory in the war against Germany's enemies. Again, as so often before, Providence was invoked as having shown—by saving Hitler's life on July 20,

Hitler's  
last  
Broadcast

1944—its will to let him win. The alleged murderous intentions of the Allies against the whole German people were painted in the darkest colours, and Jews as well as Bolsheviks received the usual attention, this time adorned with

references to the horrible atrocities allegedly committed by Russia's "Asiatic hordes" against Germans in the east. He made a final appeal to German youth to fight on fanatically; if this was done, the crisis was sure to be mastered.

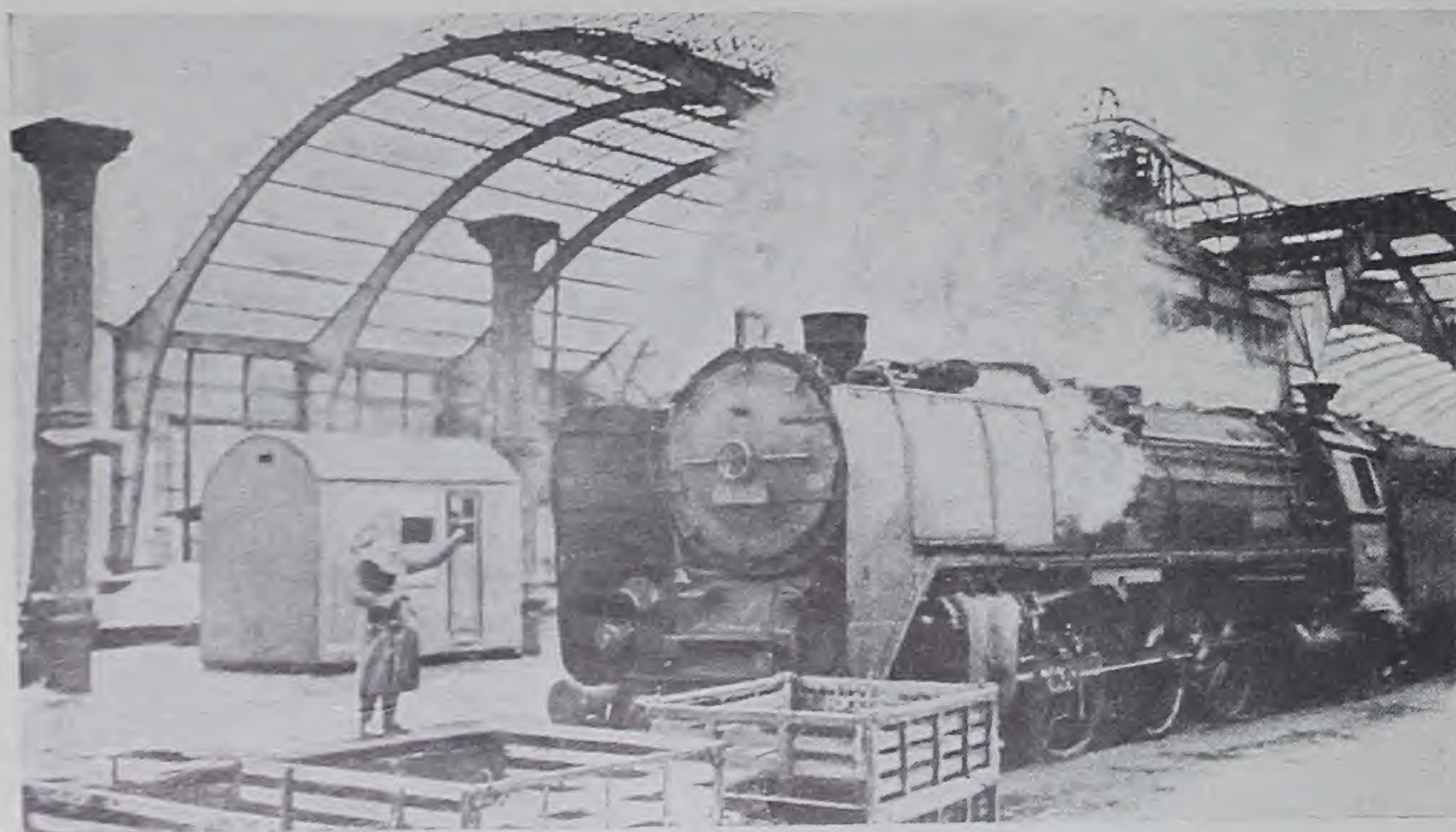
If Hitler appealed only to the faithful, the German propaganda machine itself, still led by Goebbels, did not give up the attempt to persuade the people that all was not lost even militarily. Though the daily war reports could, on land, report nothing

Goebbels's  
Propaganda  
Continues



### COLLECTIONS FOR THE VOLKSSTÜRM

In an attempt to overcome the shortage of clothing for the Volkssturm (see page 3173) in the winter of 1944-45, street-to-street collections were organized. Known as the 'Volksopfer' ('People's Offering'), the campaign was responsible for collecting old uniforms of almost any kind, boots, and anything resembling military equipment. Slogan on the van reads: 'The Führer expects your Offering for the Army and the Volkssturm.' Photos, Associated Press



### WAR ON GERMANY'S RAILWAYS

With the mounting Allied air attacks on communications in the Reich in the early months of 1945, rebuilding of bombed railway stations became an almost insuperable task. Here, in what remained of a bombed station, a solitary hut serves as booking-office, goods depot, super-intendant's office, telephone-exchange and station workshop.

Photo, Planet News

but catastrophic losses of territory in the east and, from February onwards, also in the west, there were still air and sea where German successes could be claimed. The Luftwaffe had almost ceased to be a factor with which the Allied air forces had to reckon. Yet there were still the V-weapons. V1 was finished by this time, as the Germans now possessed no bases near enough to Britain to launch them successfully. V2, however, could still be employed to a limited extent, and it was still a weapon on the alleged successes of which German propaganda tried to dwell.

Another such weapon was the U-boats, now equipped with Schnorkel air-masts (see page 3494) enabling them to travel long distances under water. A spectacular success of German naval engineering, had it been achieved three years earlier, it might have altered the course of the Battle of the Atlantic. Now, however, with all German naval





### GERMANS PUT OUT FLAGS OF SURRENDER

Two days after the fall of Coblenz on March 18, 1945, all German resistance west of the Rhine collapsed. As the Allied armies swept towards the heart of the Reich, they were greeted in many districts by white flags hung out by civilians, who despite orders to evacuate had remained in their homes after the Wehrmacht (and Nazi Party officials) had retreated. Here U.S. 1st Army troops occupy a white-flagged street at Engers, near Coblenz.

*Photo, U.S. Army Signal Corps*

bases on the open Atlantic save those in Norway gone and Allied shipping tonnage multiplied, it had no more than a limited nuisance value. It served, however, to provide German newspapers with many a big headline during the last months of the war.

For the rest, German official propaganda was mainly on the defensive. A special effort was made to counteract the effects it was feared the conference of the Big Three in the Crimea (see page 3563) might have on the German population. Newspapers, on Goebbels's orders, prophesied an appeal by the Allies to the German people which, it was said, would be only a treacherous attempt to lure them—like Wilson's Fourteen Points—into laying down their arms, in order to enslave them the more easily. When the conference ended without such an appeal being made, Goebbels told the Germans that this made it quite clear that the Allies, on Moscow's order, were determined to annihilate the whole German people, who would answer by a still more determined resistance.

With more and more of the soil of

Germany lost to the conquering armies of the Allies there arose, on top of all the other problems, a new one for the German Government: the problem of refugees. Actually they had created it themselves. To some extent the Nazi authorities attempted a sort of "scorched earth policy": where possible the population was told to evacuate places threatened by the enemy, to drive away all the cattle and to burn and destroy everything that could be of any use to the Allies.

In the west this order was followed only to a very limited extent. Hard as the Nazi party tried to make the struggle against Britons and Americans "a people's war," they did not succeed. The majority of the German population in the west wanted the war to be over as quickly as possible. They were not much afraid of the conquering armies of the western Allies, whom a

good many Germans regarded as liberators, though this view was never encouraged by Allied propaganda. In some places the Allied armies came near all party officials left hurriedly, and this almost invariably led the population to hang out white flags. Most of these places were occupied without having to suffer from actual fighting and gunfire. Men of the so-called Volkssturm did not resist unless they were forced to do so.

Here and there, however, party and army together prevented any move to surrender, shot at people who were showing the white flag and executed officers who were more intent on saving German lives and property than on fighting on in an utterly hopeless situation. Wherever such resistance was met, it was easily crushed by the

White Flags  
in  
Germany





### GERMANS GO UNDERGROUND

As the Allied Armies overran the Reich early in 1945, large numbers of civilians were driven underground to live in cellars and shelters. Here German families huddle in sandhill cave shelters at Haltern, between Wesel and Münster, to protect themselves from the shellfire of the advancing Allies. Right, unfinished street shelters at Coblenz after its fall on March 18.



Allied armies, though with grave losses to the desperate defenders and the places they tried to defend.

It was quite different in the east. There the atrocity propaganda of the Nazis had had a very marked effect.

**Effects of Anti-Russian Propaganda** One of the reasons for this was that very many Germans—those serving with the Army

as well as civilians—knew of the crimes which the Germans themselves had committed in Russia, and thought it not unlikely that the Russians, now they had changed roles with the Germans by invading German soil, would be determined to pay them back ;

and official propaganda—in order to strengthen the will to resist—had done its best to increase these fears.

On March 6 the chief of staff of the German Army, Colonel - General

Guderian, appeared before a press conference in Berlin in order to lend the highest possible authority to this sort of talk. He quoted an order of the day by Marshal **Zhukov** which allegedly **Misinterpreted** showed the Russian intention of destroying the German people. (Actually, Zhukov had said that the Russian Armies were now pursuing the *Fascist beast* into its lair and would destroy it there. It was Guderian himself who identified "Fascist beast" with the German people.) Then the general introduced two German officers who claimed to have got through the Russian lines after having spent several days in the zone just occupied by the Red Army, and who painted in the most lurid colours the awful things which—as they claimed to have heard or seen—the "Asiatic Hordes" had done to German civilians, in particular to German women. These and similar stories were given the strongest possible publicity, and they were not only believed, but even added to by circulating rumours.

The effect was terrifying even to the German authorities. Huge streams of refugees, literally millions of them, covered the roads leading from the east to the centre of the Reich, crowded the few trains still running, invaded the cities and towns which lay in their way, and all the measures taken to provide food and shelter for them proved utterly inadequate. One of these waves of refugees, amounting to a few hundred thousands, had just swamped Dresden when one of the fiercest air-raids—coming from the west, but intended to help the Red Army tactically by dislocating traffic and communications—hit the town and killed a great many of those who, for lack of room, had not been able to take shelter.

### NEW ALLIED CURRENCY FOR THE REICH

The British Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir John Anderson, announced on October 3, 1944, that Allied forces in Germany were using Allied military marks circulating at par with the Reichsmark, and that the rate of exchange had been provisionally fixed in agreement with the U.S. authorities at 40 Reichsmark to the pound and 10 Reichsmark to the dollar. Below, obverse and reverse of an Allied 10-mark note.





# WAR PICTURES PAINTED FOR THE NATION



RUBY LOFTUS SCREWING A BREECH RING

Dame Laura Knight, R.A.

IN October 1945 a representative exhibition was held at Burlington House, London, consisting of approximately one-fifth of the 5,000 works of art commissioned or purchased by the War Artists' Advisory Committee set up in the autumn of 1939 to make 'an artistic record of the war in all its aspects.' The collection had been circulating since the early days of the war in Britain, the Empire, and the United States. Here we give a selection of these paintings. Among the well-known artists commissioned was Eric Ravilious (his **COASTAL DEFENCES** is reproduced on the next page), who was killed while flying over Iceland.

Most of the pictures were painted on the spot, but some were reconstructed from eyewitness accounts, for instance, Raymond Coxon's **SHIPWRECKED** and Richard Eurich's **DUNKIRK BEACHES** 1940. (The latter is owned by the Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey, High Commissioner for Canada, and is reproduced here by his permission.) Central seated figure in A. Olivier's **OPERATIONS ROOM CONFERENCE**, painted at Bomber Command in October 1943, is Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Harris. Seated on his left is Brigadier-General F. L. Anderson, U.S.A.A.F., while standing on his right is Air Vice-Marshal R. H. M. S. Saundby. In Dame Laura Knight's **'TAKE OFF'**, the R.A.F. men depicted are Flight-Lieutenant Stuart White, Flying-Officer Escreet, Flying-Officer Bettles, D.F.C., and Flight-Sergeant Quadling. Miss Ruby Loftus (above) is screwing the breech ring of a Bofors gun—the most highly-skilled operation in the Royal Ordnance Factory where she worked.



SHIPWRECKED

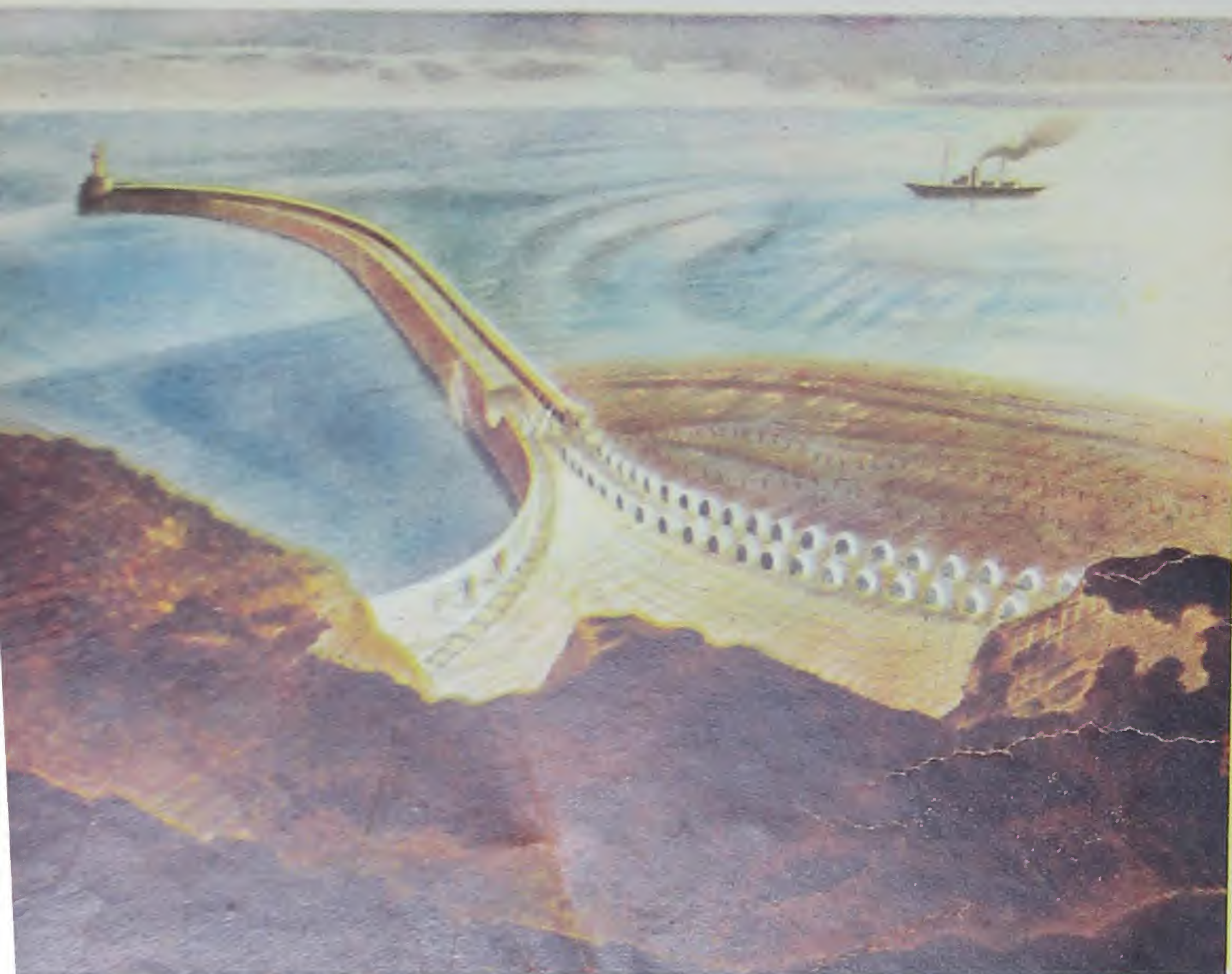
Raymond Coxon





R.A.F. MORSE SCHOOL

Charles Cundall, R.A.



COASTAL DEFENCES

Eric Ravilious



STRETCHER PARTY AT WORK



'TAKE OFF'





S CLOTHING W. L. Clause

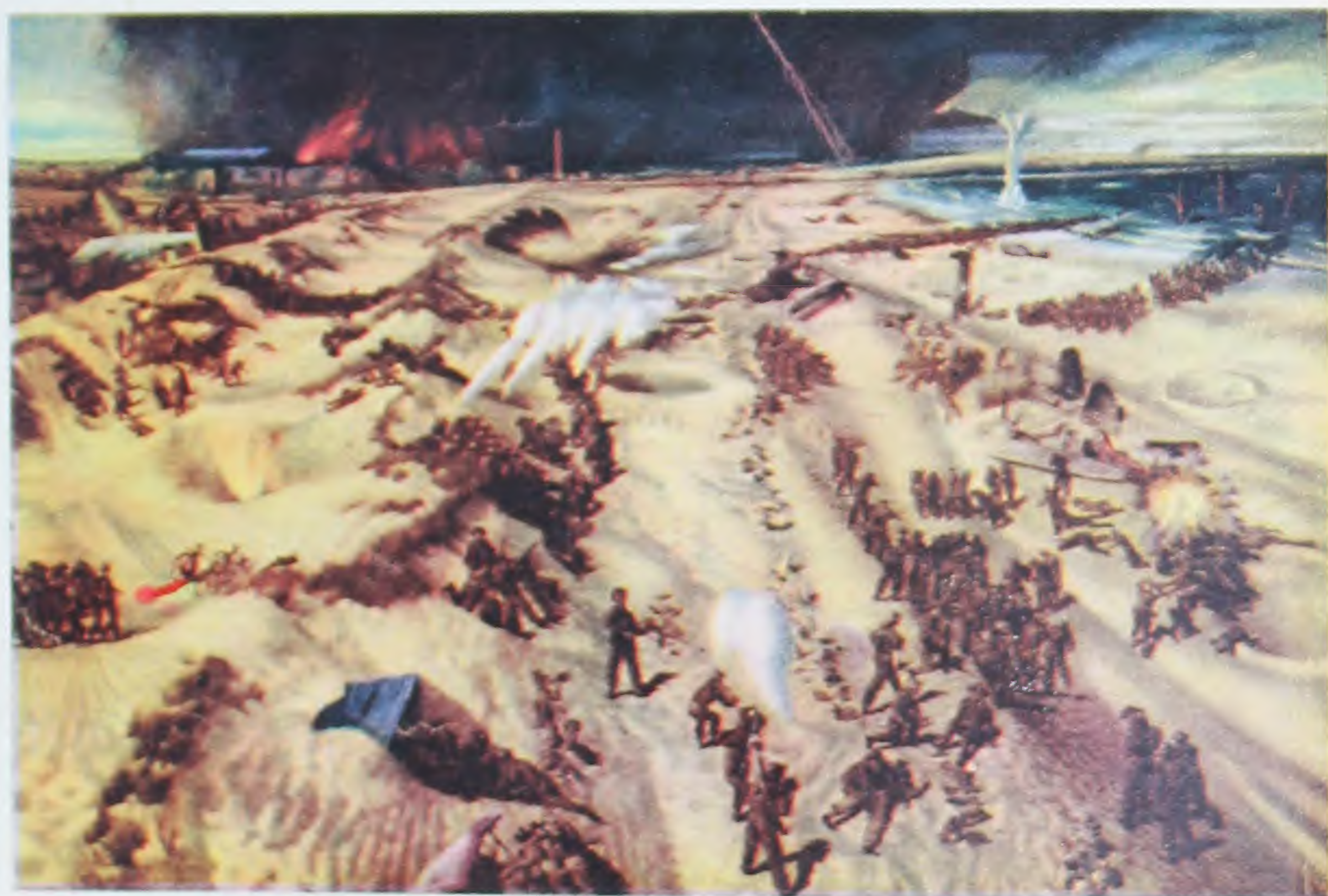


Dame Laura Knight, R.A.



OPERATIONS ROOM CONFERENCE

A. Olivier



DUNKIRK BEACHES, 1940

Richard Eurich, A.R.A.





### 'MULBERRY B' PORT AT ARROMANCHES AS SEEN BY A WAR ARTIST

Pictorial records of the war commissioned by the War Artists' Advisory Committee included these of the 'Mulberry B' port in Normandy. (See also pages 3028 and 3030.) They were painted by Lieutenant Stephen Bone, son of Sir Muirhead Bone, from sketches done on the spot shortly after the port was constructed in the summer of 1944. Supplies are seen coming ashore along the floating pierways. Top, general view of the harbour.

*Crown Copyright*



One of the means by which the Nazi party tried to stiffen resistance against the Allies was the so-called "Werewolf" Movement. German broadcasting stations which pretended to be in the occupied territory (actually they were sending from the centre of Germany) read proclamations asking the whole people, including 'Werewolf' women and youngsters, Movement to do every possible harm to the Allied armies, in particular to their lines of communication. These broadcasts were given a strong publicity within the remaining territory of Nazi Germany but never found many followers in the occupied districts of the west. A few misguided Super-Nazis among the young generation made some such attempts and were quickly disposed of. As a whole the German people, who had been educated to obey any authority and never to act as individuals, were neither willing nor even able to conduct a guerilla campaign. After the middle of April nothing was heard of the "Werewolf" Movement even in the remaining Nazi papers.

All through April, the space within which the Nazis still ruled was shrinking rapidly. By the beginning of the month 21 German divisions were trapped in the Ruhr; they were destroyed in less than three weeks (see Chapter 369). On April 13, Vienna was taken by the Russians (see page 3625), who were also rapidly approaching the Reich



#### JEWISH WOMEN SLAVE-WORKERS RELEASED

Many thousands of slave-workers were released by the Allies as they swept into the Reich in the early months of 1945. These Jewish women, among many taken from homes in France, Holland, Belgium, Italy, and Poland, were freed by the U.S. 9th Army from Kaunitz where they had been forced to make munitions. Each was tattooed with a number on the left arm and had a yellow cross daubed on the back of her clothes.

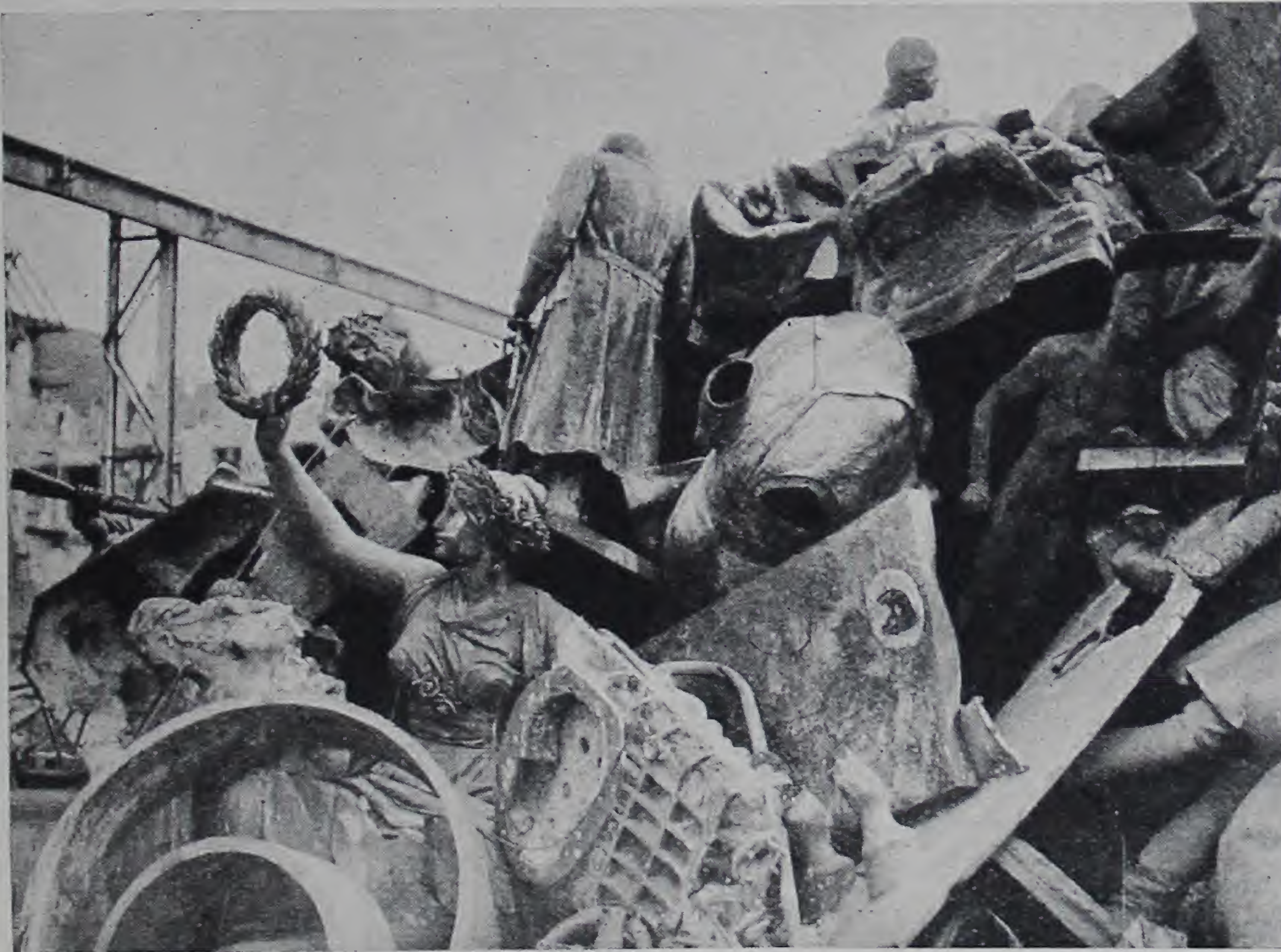
*Photo, Keystone*

capital (see Chapter 362). A week later the Americans took Nuremberg and were nearing the frontier of Czechoslovakia. On April 16 Hitler, in an order of the day, which, remarkably enough, was directed only to the German armies in the east, still dared

to predict victory for Germany. "Asia," so he said, thereby meaning the Russian armies, "will bleed to death before the defences of the Reich capital . . . Berlin remains German, Vienna will become German again, and Europe will never become Russian."

It was characteristic of this, as of other last attempts to prolong the death struggle of the Nazi Empire, that the western Allies were hardly mentioned. The Germans must be made to believe that only the fight against the Russians counted, and that all could be saved once the attack from the east could be stopped. There was still behind it the fallacious idea that the western powers would come to an accord with Germany in order to prevent the Russians from going too far west. Hints of this sort appeared also in the long article which Dr. Goebbels wrote for the "Völkischer Beobachter" on the occasion of Hitler's birthday (April 20). "The war," he said there, "is nearing its end. The folly has passed its climax. The perverse coalition between plutocracy and bolshevism is falling to pieces. . . . The head of the coalition [meaning Roosevelt, who died on April 12] is crushed, but the Fuehrer carries on as usual."

It was one of the very last issues of the infamous Nazi paper that carried this article, together with a huge portrait of Hitler. In reality, the Fuehrer



#### ALLIED ARMIES RECOVER LOOTED METAL

Advancing across Europe in the winter of 1944-45, the Allied armies found ample evidence of the looting of metal from countries formerly occupied by the Germans. In Hamburg alone, some 50,000 church bells stolen from Belgium and Holland, many with historic associations, were discovered ready for smelting. In this dump, also in Hamburg, were piled, irrespective of their artistic merits, metal statues and works of art of many periods.

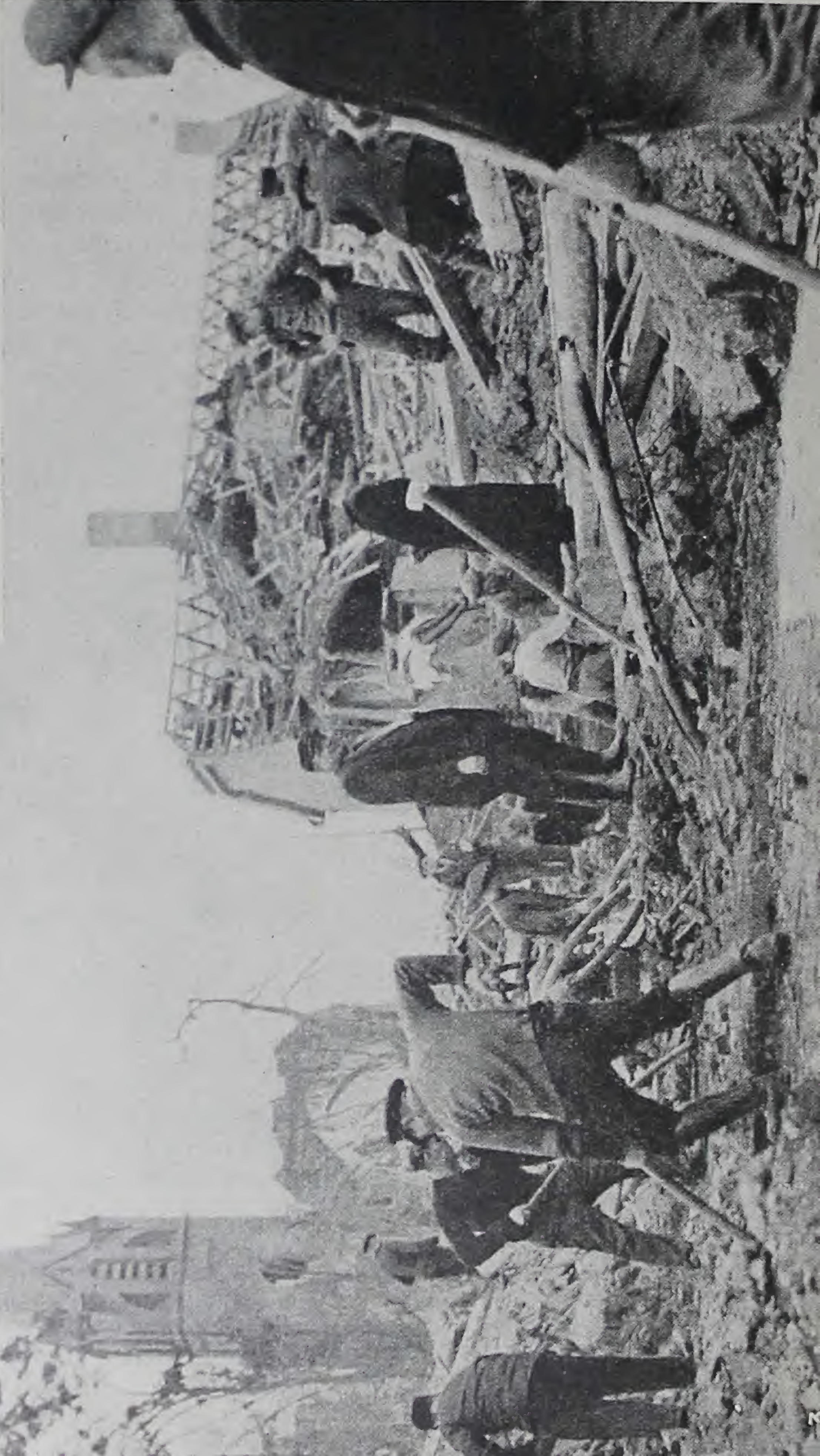
*Photo, British Newspaper Pool*



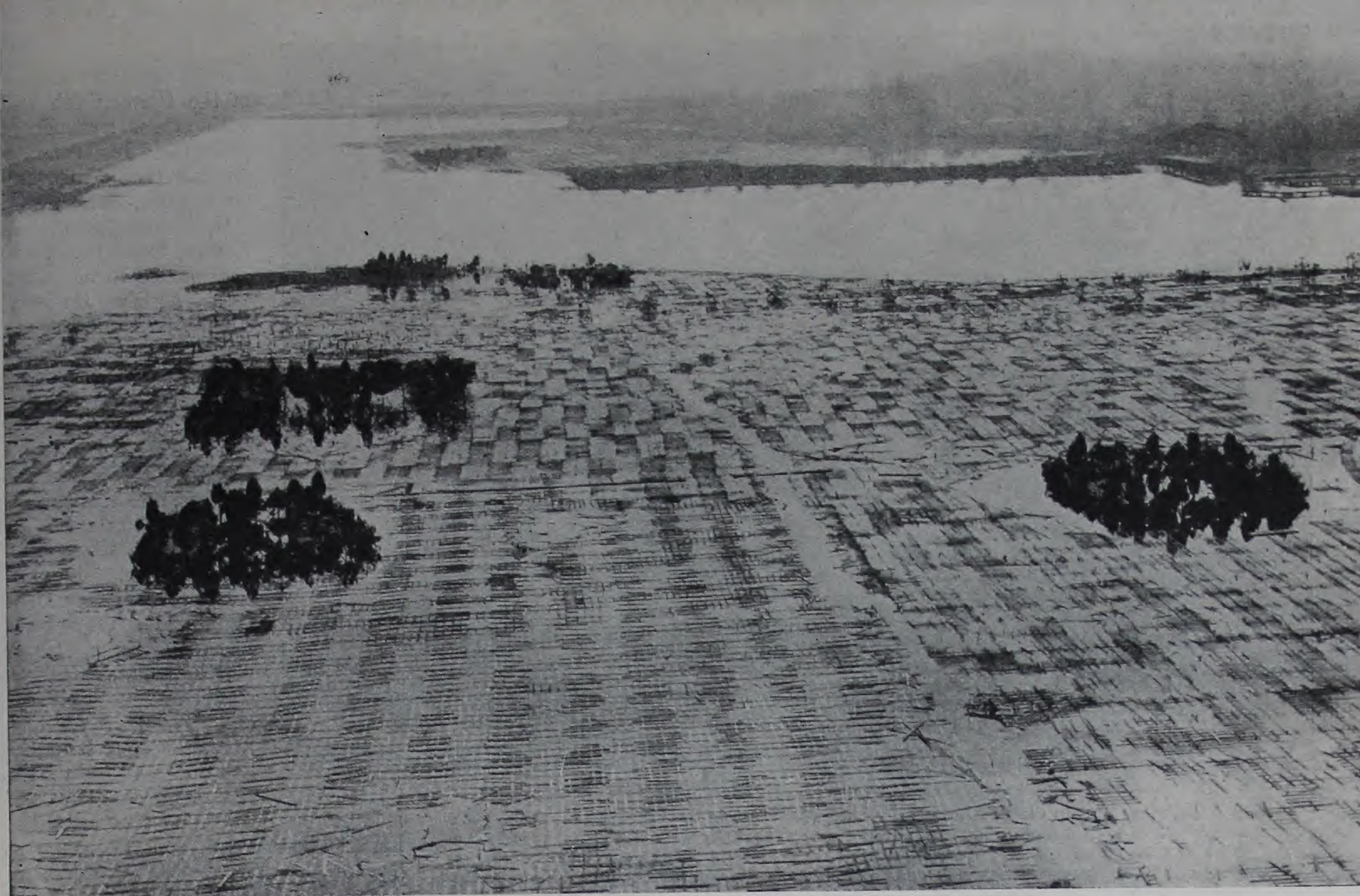


### GERMANY'S REACTION TO INVASION

As the British and U.S. armies overran western Germany in 1945 they encountered many German civilians who, defying Nazi orders to evacuate, had concealed themselves to await the arrival of the Allied forces. 1. Germans emerge from their homes to surrender to troops of the U.S. 36th Infantry Division. 2. The population of Kyllburg, in the Rhineland, gathers in the streets to hear orders from occupying forces of the U.S. 3rd Army. 3. These townspeople at Brühl, near Cologne, were put to work by a U.S. Military Government unit to clean up bomb damage and search for dead among the debris. 4. In Frankfurt-on-Main, after its occupation by the U.S. 3rd Army on March 30, civilians loot a tobacconist's.







#### R.A.F. UNMASKED HANOVER'S ELABORATE CAMOUFLAGE

In Hanover, home of Germany's largest rubber and tire works, which fell on April 10, 1945 to the U.S. 84th Infantry Division, camouflage precautions against Allied bombing were found on a vast scale. Here is a large lake, the Machsee, covered with floating wooden slats strung together to resemble solid earth and dotted with evergreen. The ruse did not long deceive the R.A.F. who, before the city's capture, partly uncovered the lake with their bombs. *Photo, British Official*

was very far from carrying on as usual. He lived in the Berlin Chancellery, trying to direct the resistance of Berlin,

**Hitler a  
Nervous  
Wreck** whose eastern suburbs were already in Russian hands, and could not

make up his mind whether to stay there in his capital or to flee to his "Berghof" at Berchtesgaden where a certain amount of preparation for a last armed resistance (greatly overrated by some observers in Allied countries) had been made. Hitler was, by this time, a nervous wreck, a man whose every hope had been smashed but who could not—did not dare to—give up. On April 22, however, he had a complete breakdown, from which he did not recover. By now he was resolved not to attempt the flight to Berchtesgaden, but to remain in Berlin and there to commit suicide if his last hope—relief by the 12th German army under General Wenck—should fail. This was the plan he revealed to Professor Speer, Minister of Armament and War Production, who visited him on April 23.

About this time Hitler became aware that two of his chief lieutenants, Goering and Himmler, had tried to open negotiations with the Allies. Himmler met Count Bernadotte, a relative of the King of Sweden and President of the Swedish Red Cross, on

April 24, and offered surrender to the Western Allies only, in the vain hope that he might thus save his life. The Allied answer was that surrender would be accepted only if it was offered to all the Allies, including Russia. Next day the Russian and American armies linked up on the Elbe near Torgau, thereby cutting the remaining body of Nazi Germany in two, and on the 26th Hitler received in his shelter in the Reich Chancellery Field-Marshal Ritter von Greim, whom he appointed Chief of the Luftwaffe in succession to Goering.

Reports by people who saw him during those last few days of his life (in particular a detailed report by a German woman pilot, Hanna Reitsch, who left Hitler and his followers in the last aircraft to get out of the beleaguered city—see page 3552) say that he no longer behaved like a human being. He sat for hours, staring and not talking at all, then he got into a frenzy of activity, trying to direct, and give orders to, the "relieving" army of General Wenck which, however, at this time had already been wiped out. Then he heaped reproaches for the fate besetting Nazi

Germany on the head of almost everybody save himself, cursing in particular the "traitors" Goering and Himmler.

Hitler's last days—from April 28 to April 30—were filled with preparations for his death. He made two rather loquacious testaments—a "private" and a "political" one—which he managed to send out of Berlin. In his political testament he nominated a new Reich Government. Whereas he himself had been head of state and head of the government at the same time, he now divided these two offices again as they had been up to the death of President Hindenburg. As Reich President, he named none of those who had previously (like Goering and Hess) been designated to this office, but Grand-Admiral Doenitz who was, at the same time, supposed to keep the office of chief of the German Navy and to take over, in addition, the War Ministry. Dr. Goebbels was to become Reich Chancellor, and Bormann, former Deputy Fuehrer, was to become Chief of the Nazi Party. Both Goering and Himmler were solemnly deprived of all their offices and expelled from the





### HITLER FACES DEFEAT ON THE RIVER ODER

In January 1945 began the Red Army's sustained advance from the Vistula to the Oder. The enemy's plans to hold up the Russians' advance west of the Oder were completely upset by the speed and vigour of the Red Army's drive. Here Hitler—in one of the last photographs taken of him—discusses strategy with a group of his staff officers at his H.Q. near the Oder as the Russian armies pushed forward.

*Photo, Sport & General*

Nazi Party. The testament ended with another fierce attack on the Jews on the old familiar lines.

In the evening of April 29—when the Reich Chancellery was already under the steady fire of the Russian guns—Hitler had himself married to Eva

#### Hitler's Marriage and Death

Braun, a young woman who for some years had been one of his few intimate friends. There was a wedding meal in which only a few people participated. In the early morning of the next day (around 2.30 a.m.) Hitler received the servants and other staff of the Reich Chancellery to bid them good-bye. Later that morning 180 litres (about 40 gallons) of benzine were brought to the Reich Chancellery. In the afternoon, between 2 and 3 o'clock on April 30, the last act seems to have taken place. There are reasons for believing that Hitler shot his newly wed wife and then himself. It is almost certain that, immediately after they had died, their corpses were carried out into the court of the Chancellery and burned, after great quantities of benzine had been poured over them. Shortly afterwards Dr. Goebbels, together with his family, also committed suicide.

On May 1 Bormann succeeded in informing Grand-Admiral Doenitz who,

together with other members of the Reich Government, had fled to Flensburg near the Danish border. From Flensburg radio station, Doenitz told the German people on the same day that the Fuehrer had "fallen" in the Battle for Berlin and that he (Doenitz) was taking over (*see* Historic Document 297, page 3640).

From the beginning the "Doenitz Government" was no more than a liquidating commission. Yet it was not this "Government" which finally signed Germany's unconditional surrender. After the Germans had, at the end of the war of 1914-18, invented the legend of the stab in the back of the army, and had coined the slogan "undefeated on the battlefield," the Allies had good reason this time to make the German military leaders sign the surrender, thus unmistakably acknowledging Germany's military defeat.

The German armies in Italy surrendered unconditionally to Field-Marshal Alexander's armies at Caserta on April 29 (*see* Chapter 361). On May 2, at 3 p.m., exactly 48 hours after Hitler's death, the Reich capital surrendered to the Russians. On May 4 all German forces in Holland, North-West Germany and Denmark surrendered to the British (*see* Chapter 357). On the same day the remnants

of the German 9th and 12th armies surrendered to the U.S. 102nd Infantry Division (U.S. 9th Army). On the 6th, Army Group "G," comprising all German forces in Austria, surrendered to the Allied 6th Army Group. Finally, on May 7, Colonel-General Gustav Jodl, in the name of the High Command of the Wehrmacht, signed the unconditional surrender of all German fighting forces at Rheims, and this surrender was confirmed in Berlin next day, when Field-Marshal Keitel (Chief of the Army High Command), General-Admiral Hans Georg von Friedeburg (C.-in-C. Navy) and Colonel-General Stumpf of the Luftwaffe signed on behalf of the German High

Command, Marshal Zhukov and Air Chief Marshal Tedder signing for the Allies. Lieutenant-General Carl Spaatz and General de Lattre de Tassigny signed as witnesses. (For text of the instrument of surrender, and broadcasts by German leaders immediately before and after it, *see* Historic Documents 296-300, pages 3,640-41.)

The great slaughter was over, as far as Europe was concerned.

### THE CHANGING MAP

German children study a map put up outside an American billet in an occupied area of western Germany, and showing from day to day the increasing encroachment of the Allied forces on the Reich from both west and east.

*Photo, U.S. Official*







### SURRENDER CEREMONY IN THE REICH CAPITAL

Germany's surrender was ratified at 00.16 hours on May 8, 1945, in the Berlin suburb of Karlshorst in a building which had formerly housed the Engineering College of the Wehrmacht. Because of the heavy damage suffered by the German capital, no more suitable building could be found. The German signatories were Field-Marshal Keitel, General-Admiral von Friedeburg, and Colonel-General Stumpf (see illus. in page 3651). For the Allies, Marshal Zhukov signed for the Soviet High Command, Air-Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder for the Allied Expeditionary Force. 1. Marshal Zhukov reads the surrender terms. On his right is Air-Marshal Tedder and on his left General Spaatz. 2. Marshal Zhukov addresses the gathering after the Germans had withdrawn. 3. Allied leaders outside the Engineering College.





## THE LAST ACT OF SURRENDER IN THE WEST

Historic Document CCXCVI is the most important of all the documents relating to the war published in this history: it is the terms of the final act of unconditional surrender in Berlin of all Germany's armed forces to representatives of the Allied Expeditionary Force, and the Soviet High Command. Documents CCXCVII to CCCI are the texts of announcements made by the German leaders who succeeded Hitler to their people immediately before and after this act

**Terms of the Final Act of Unconditional Surrender of Germany's Armed Forces signed in Berlin at 00.16 hours on May 8, 1945:**

1. We the undersigned, acting by authority of the German High Command, hereby surrender unconditionally to the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force, and simultaneously to the Supreme High Command of the Red Army, all forces on land, at sea, and in the air who are at this date under German control.

2. The German High Command will at once issue orders to all German military, naval, and air authorities and to all forces under German control to cease active operations at 23.01 hours, Central European Time, on May 8, 1945, to remain in the positions occupied at that time and to disarm completely, handing over their weapons and equipment to the local allied commanders or officers designated by representatives of the Allied Supreme Commands. No ship, vessel, or aircraft is to be scuttled, or any damage done to their hulls, machinery, or equipment, nor to machines of all kinds, armament, apparatus, and all the technical means of prosecution of war in general.

3. The German High Command will at once issue to the appropriate commanders, and ensure the carrying out of, any further orders issued by the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force, and by the Supreme High Command of the Red Army.

4. This act of military surrender is without prejudice to, and will be superseded by, any general instrument of surrender imposed by or on behalf of the United Nations and applicable to Germany and the German armed forces as a whole.

5. In the event of the German High Command or any of the forces under their control failing to act in accordance with this act of surrender, the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force, and the Supreme High Command of the Red Army will take such punitive or other action as they deem appropriate.

6. This act is drawn up in the English, Russian, and German languages. The English and Russian are the authentic texts.

Grand-Admiral Karl Doenitz, C.-in-C. of the German Navy, announced his succession to Hitler on May 1, 1945, in the following broadcast:

**G**ERMAN men and women soldiers of the German Wehrmacht. Our Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler, has fallen. The German people bow in deepest mourning and veneration.

He recognized beforehand the terrible danger of Bolshevism and devoted his life to fighting it. At the end of this, his battle, and his unswerving straight path of life, stands his death as a hero in the capital of the Reich. All his life meant service to the German people. His battle against the Bolshevik flood benefited not only Europe but the whole world.

The Fuehrer has appointed me as his successor. Fully conscious of the responsibility, I take over the leadership of the German people at this fateful hour. It is my first task to save the German people from destruction by the Bolsheviks and it is only to achieve this that the fight continues.

As long as the British and Americans hamper us from reaching this end we shall fight and defend ourselves against them as well. The British and Americans do not fight for the interests of their own people, but for the spreading of Bolshevism.

What the German people have achieved and suffered is

unique in history. In the coming times of distress of our people I shall do my utmost to make life bearable for our brave women, men, and children.

To achieve all this I need your help. Trust me; keep order and discipline in towns and the countryside. Everybody do his duty. Only thus shall we be able to alleviate the sufferings which the future will bring to each of us and avoid collapse. If we do all that is in our power to do, the Lord will not abandon us.

**The following order of the day was issued on May 1 to the Wehrmacht by Admiral Doenitz as its new Supreme Commander:**

**T**HE FUEHRER has fallen. He fell faithful to his great ideal to save the peoples of Europe from Bolshevism. He staked his life, and died the death of a hero. With his passing one of the greatest heroes of German history has passed away. In proud reverence and sorrow we lower our flag before him.

The Fuehrer has appointed me his successor as Head of the State and Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht. I assume supreme command of the Wehrmacht with the determination to continue the struggle against Bolshevism until the fighting troops and the hundreds of thousands of families of the German eastern territories are rescued from enslavement or extermination. Against the British and Americans I shall continue the struggle so far and so long as they hinder me in carrying out the fight against Bolshevism. The situation demands from you, who have already accomplished such great historical feats and who are now longing for the end of the war, further struggle without question. I demand discipline and obedience. Chaos and downfall can be prevented only by obedience without reserve to my orders. He who at this moment shirks his duty is a coward and traitor, for he brings death or slavery to German women and children.

The oath of allegiance you swore to the Fuehrer now applies to each one of you without further formality to myself. German soldiers: Do your duty. The life of our people is at stake.

**Professor Albert Speer, Minister of Armaments and War Production, on May 3 ordered the German people to work for reconstruction in a broadcast as follows:**

**N**EVER before has a cultured people been smitten as grievously as the German people now. Never before has any land been so laid waste by the fury of the war as has Germany. You are all disheartened now and incensed. Instead of faith, desperation has entered your hearts; you have become tired and cynical. This must not be. The bearing of the German nation in this war has been such that, in times to come, future generations will look upon it with admiration. Let us not stop to cry out our eyes about the past. To work!

The havoc wrought by this war has only one parallel in history—the Thirty Years' War. Yet the decimation of the people by starvation and plagues must not be allowed to reach the proportions of that period. That, and that alone, is the reason why Admiral Doenitz has resolved not to lay down arms. This is the only meaning of the continuance of the struggle to prevent the death of fleeing German men. It is our last duty, and the German people have to shoulder it.

It rests with our enemies to decide whether they wish to grant to the German people the possibilities that lie open to a nation which is defeated but which has shown its heroic spirit in battle, and imprinted its reputation on the pages of history as a generous and decent opponent. Yet each one



## *Historic Documents: Announcements by German Leaders in May 1945 (contd.).*

of us must contribute his share, and in the months to come devote our strength to the work of reconstruction. You must overcome your lethargy, your paralysing despair. I therefore issue this order to you for the immediate future:

1. The most urgent work is the repair of the damage done to the German railway system. As far as the enemy allows it, or where he orders it, the reconstruction work has to be speeded up with every means, to make possible the transportation of food stuffs to areas where starvation stares the people in the face. Remember that the only possibility of rejoining your families lies in the rehabilitation of the German railways.

2. Both industrial factories and workshops of artisans are under an obligation to carry out as quickly as possible any order concerning the repairs of the railway system.

3. The German farmers who in six years of war have obeyed their instructions, fully realizing their responsibility towards the entire German nation, have now to raise their deliveries to the peak.

4. Foodstuffs must have priority in transportation over all other goods. Food, electric current, and gas, as well as coal and wood-producing enterprises, must be supplied before any others. If we work with the same tenacity as we have done during the past years, the German nation can be kept alive without further serious losses. Whether our enemies will allow this we cannot yet foretell. It is, however, my duty to use all my strength to keep the German nation alive.

The direction of our fate no longer lies in our hands. Only divine providence can alter our future. We ourselves can, however, contribute to it by doing our work with determination and industry, by meeting our enemies with dignity and self-confidence, by becoming more modest at heart, and by keeping an unwavering belief in the future of our people which, for ever, will remain our most important concern. May God protect Germany!

**Count Lutz Schwerin von Krosigk, Foreign Minister in Doenitz's short-lived government, broadcast to the German people on May 7 news of Germany's unconditional surrender as follows:**

**G**ERMAN men and women, the High Command of the Wehrmacht has today, at the order of Grand Admiral Doenitz, declared the unconditional surrender of all fighting German troops. As the leading minister of the Reich Government which the Grand Admiral has appointed for dealing with the war tasks, I turn at this tragic moment of our history to the German nation. After a heroic fight of almost six years of incomparable hardness, Germany has succumbed to the overwhelming power of her enemies. . . .

A government which has a feeling of responsibility for the future of its nation was compelled to act on the collapse of all physical and material forces and to demand of the enemy the cessation of hostilities. It was the noblest task of the Grand Admiral and of the government supporting him, after the terrible sacrifices which the war demanded, to save in the last phase of the war the lives of a maximum number of fellow-countrymen. That the war was not ended immediately, simultaneously in the west and in the east, is to be explained by this reason alone. In this gravest hour of the German nation and its empire, we bow in deep reverence before the dead of this war. Their sacrifices place the highest obligations on us. Our sympathy goes out above all to the wounded, the bereaved, and to all on whom this struggle has inflicted blows.

No one must be under any illusions about the severity of the terms to be imposed on the German people by our enemies. We must now face our fate squarely and unquestioningly. Nobody can be in any doubt that the future will be difficult for each one of us, and will exact sacrifices from us in every sphere of life. We must accept this burden, and stand loyally by the obligations we have undertaken. But we must not despair and fall into mute resignation. Once again we must set ourselves to stride along a path through the dark future. From the collapse of the past,

let us preserve and save one thing, the unity of ideas of a national community which in the years of war has found its highest expression in the spirit of comradeship at the front and readiness to help one another in all the distress which has afflicted the homeland.

In our nation justice shall be the supreme law and the guiding principle. We must also recognize law as the basis of all relations between the nations. We must recognize it and respect it from inner conviction. Respect for treaties will be as sacred as the aim of our nation to belong to the European family of nations, as a member of which we want to mobilize all human, moral and material forces in order to heal the dreadful wounds which the war has caused.

Then we may hope that the atmosphere of hatred which today surrounds Germany all over the world will give place to a spirit of reconciliation among the nations without which the world cannot recover. Then we may hope that our freedom will be restored to us, without which no nation can lead a bearable and dignified existence.

We wish to devote the future of our nation to the return of the innermost and best forces of German nature, which have given to the world imperishable works and values. We view with pride the heroic struggle of our people and we shall combine with our pride in that struggle the will to contribute as a member of western culture, honest, peaceful labour—a contribution which expresses the best traditions of our nation.

May God not forsake us in our distress, and bless us in our heavy task.

**Grand Admiral Doenitz told the German people on May 8 of the cessation of hostilities in the following broadcast:—**

**G**ERMAN men and women, when I addressed you on May 1 to announce the death of the Fuehrer and my appointment as his successor, I told you that my first task would be to spare the lives of German men and women. In conformity therewith I ordered the High Command of the Wehrmacht on the night of May 6 to arrange for the unconditional surrender of all German fighting troops in all theatres of war. From 23 hours Central European Time on May 8 the guns will be silent. German soldiers, veterans of countless battles, are now treading the bitter path to captivity and are thereby making the last sacrifice for the life of our women and children and the future of our nation. We bow in respect to their gallantry, which they have proved a thousand times. We remember the fallen and the prisoners.

I have promised our brave men, women, and children to provide them with endurable living conditions so far as it is in my power to do so in the coming difficult time. I do not know yet what I shall be able to do to help you in these hard times. We have to face facts. The foundation on which the German Reich was built is a thing of the past. The unity of state and party no longer exists. The party has disappeared from the scene of its former activity. With the occupation of Germany power has passed into the hands of the occupation forces. It depends on them whether I and the Reich government formed by me will be able to continue in office or not. If I can be of assistance to the Fatherland by continuing in office, I shall do so until the German people have a chance to express their will by appointing a head of State or until the occupation powers make it impossible for me to continue in office. . . .

There is a difficult role ahead for every one of us. We must tread it with the dignity, gallantry, and discipline which the memory of our dead demands of us. We must be inspired by the will to do our best in work and achievement, without which there can be no basis for a future life. We want to march along this road in unity and justice, without which we cannot survive the hardships of the times to come. We may tread the road in the hope that the time will come when our children will live a free and secure life in a Europe at peace. I do not want to lag behind you on this thorny path. If my duty calls me to remain in office, I shall try to help you all I can. If, however, duty requires me to depart, this step will be taken in service to the people and the Reich.



# ATLANTIC AND MEDITERRANEAN AIR FEATS

*The use of radar in combating U-boats, the work of aircraft carriers in defence of Atlantic and Northern convoys, and of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces in Italy and Central Europe, the record of the Royal Air Force in minelaying—these are among the subjects covered in this chapter, written by Captain Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.*

**B**y 1945 radar, which was in its infancy when the war began, affected all air operations. During its rapid development from 1939 onwards, probably the greatest technical achievements were the design and production of the magnetron valve, which enabled radar emissions to be reduced from a wavelength measuring several metres to one measured in centimetres. The extremely short wavelength of centimetric radar required much smaller aerials and antennae, two important features in airborne sets. And centimetric emissions could be projected as beams, giving greater accuracy and range.

The U-boat threat to Britain was so serious that Coastal Command was given priority in radar at the beginning of the war, and in September 1939 a Coastal Command aircraft was the first to carry airborne radar. By the end of 1939 Air to Surface Vessel (A.S.V.—pronounced Asvic) Mark I became operational. But it was a broadcast diffusion, and its range was short—about 40 miles; it was not really efficient, and technical difficulties were numerous.

The Navy's main base was then at Scapa Flow, and a Hudson reconnaissance squadron of the R.A.F., operating off the north-east coast, was the first squadron to be fitted with radar. Sunderland flying boats engaged on anti-submarine work were next, and the Fleet Air Arm attack on the Italian fleet in Taranto harbour (see page 1315) followed a triangular A.S.V. search in darkness by a Sunderland of No. 228 Squadron, R.A.F. During the evacuations of Greece and Crete in 1941 A.S.V. radar gave good landfalls against the mountains of the islands and mainland, aiding the night flying of the Sunderlands engaged in evacuation work.

Mark II A.S.V. was fitted to two Whitley squadrons and one Wellington squadron of Coastal Command, and by mid-1941 it was proved that it could be used to find and attack U-boats. A Wellington on a transit flight from Northern Ireland to Iceland in September 1941 claimed to have made the first radar aided attack against a U-boat; it carried a radar officer, who picked up a U-boat when testing the apparatus. By mid-1942 Catalinas,

Liberators, Fortresses, and Beauforts were also fitted with radar, and the Leigh light (see illus. in page 3032) came into use. U-boat commanders could not then use darkness to cover their surfacing to recharge their batteries, for detection by radar and illumination by the Leigh light (and sometimes moonlight only) caused them losses which alarmed the German Admiralty.

In May 1942 an experimental Liberator was fitted with centimetric radar. Piloted by Wing-Commander P. J. Cundy, D.S.O., D.F.C., A.F.C., and flying from Langley Field, Virginia, it picked up a U-boat "blip" on its radar

**Radar  
and the  
U-boats**

screen many miles away, homed on to the submarine and sank it. The listening receiver which had enabled the U-boat commander to detect the approach of Mark II radar and so allow the submarine to submerge before the aircraft arrived was unable to detect centimetric radar emissions, and the U-boat crews, unaware that British scientists had beaten those of Germany, were bewildered and their morale undermined.

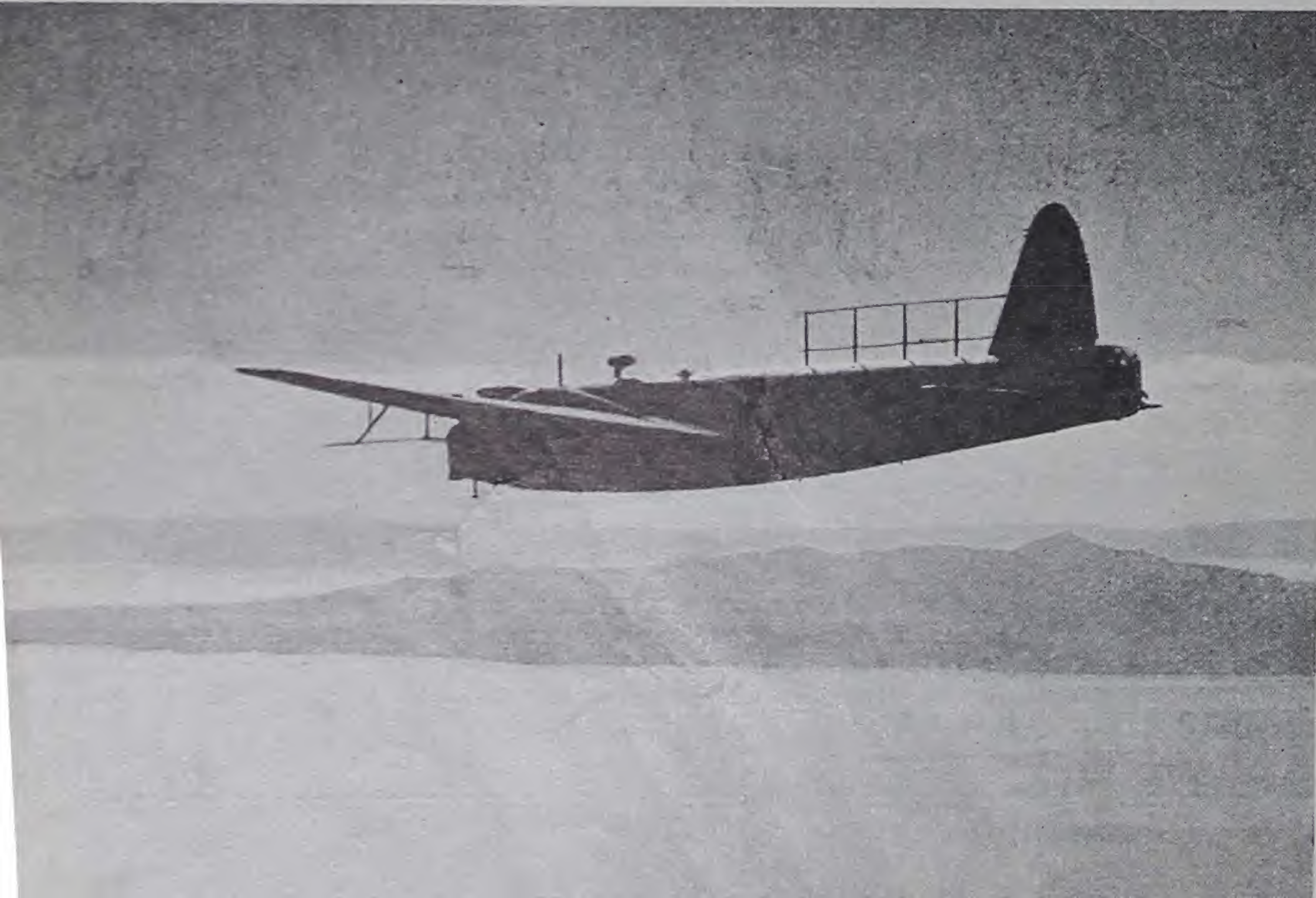
The 230-lb. depth charges filled with Torpex explosive had to fall within a very limited "hemisphere" about the U-boat to "kill" it. So, if the submarine received any appreciable opportunity to crash dive, the attack was probably innocuous; hence the importance of this new undetectable radar.

No. 210 Squadron, R.A.F., based at Sollum Voe in the Shetland Islands, was among the first units to be fitted with centimetric radar, primarily to protect Russia-bound convoys. Flying-Officer J. A. Cruikshank, of this squadron, won the V.C. on July 17, 1944, when making the squadron's first successful attack on a U-boat by this means (see illus. in page 3188).

To meet these new conditions, U-boats mounted more A.A. guns, and their commanders were ordered to stay on the surface and fight the attacking aircraft. This suited Coastal Command admirably. Sometimes the aircraft pilots closed in and sank the U-boats from a low height despite their vicious anti-aircraft gunfire. At other times

## UNDETECTABLE RADAR DEFEATED THE U-BOAT

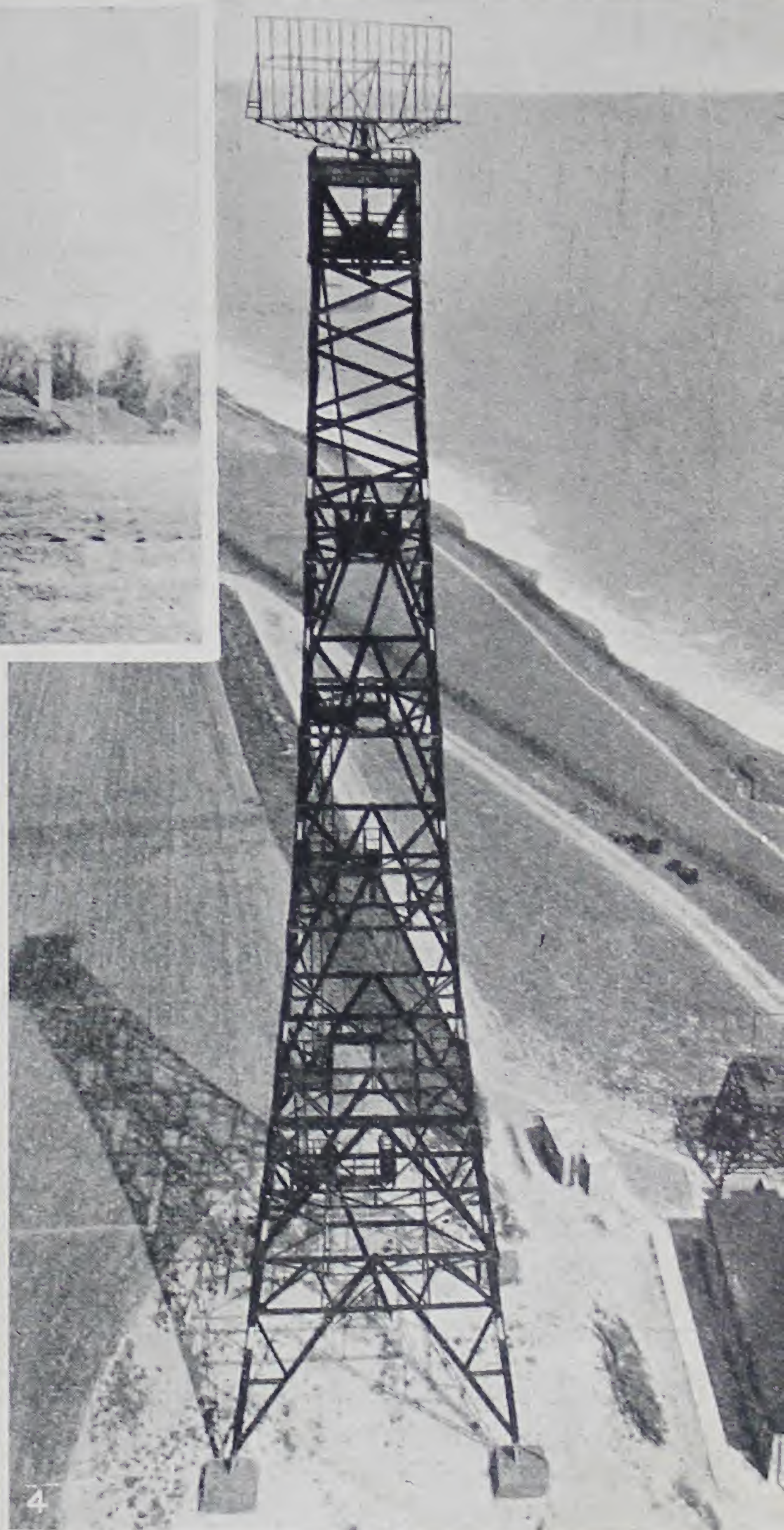
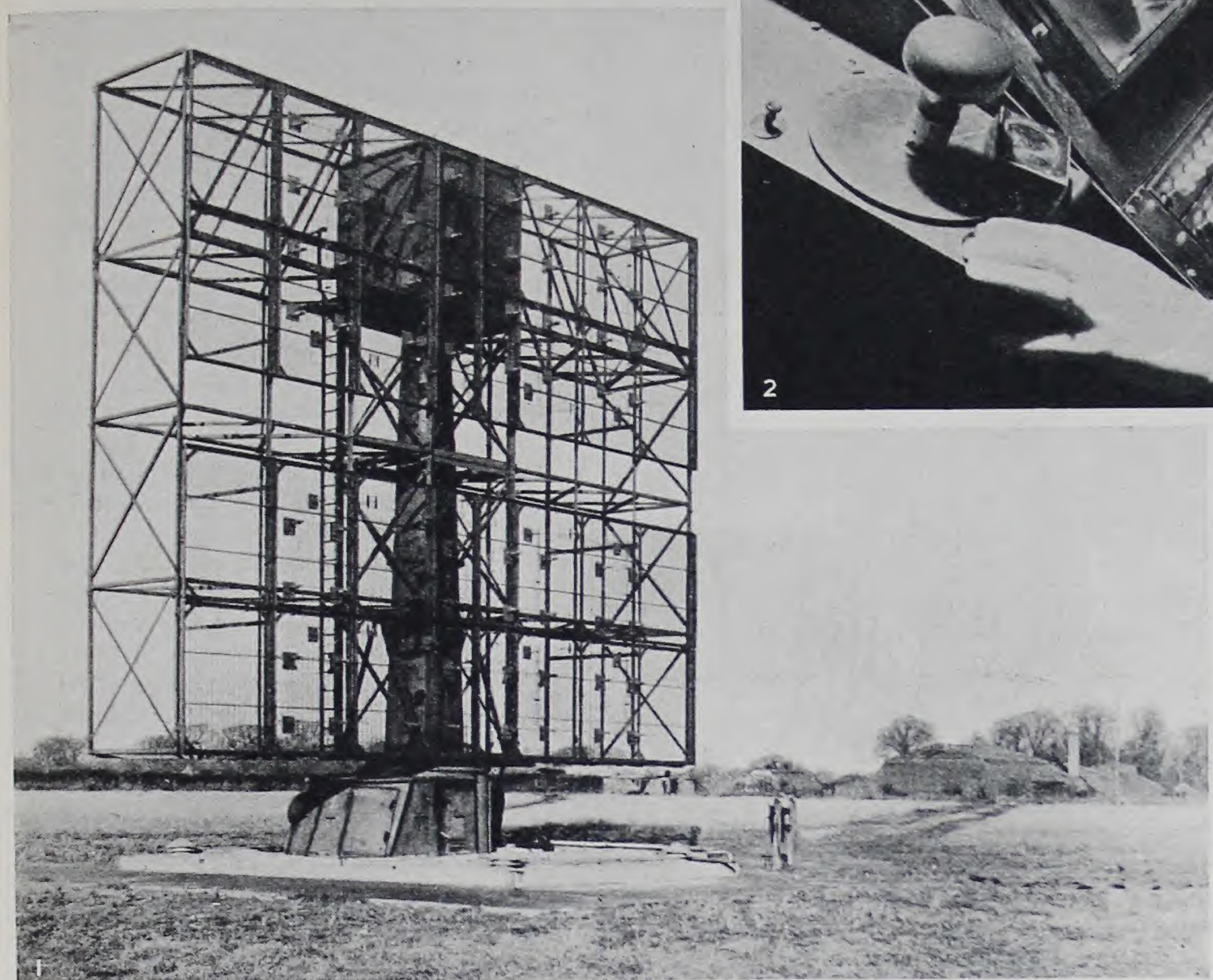
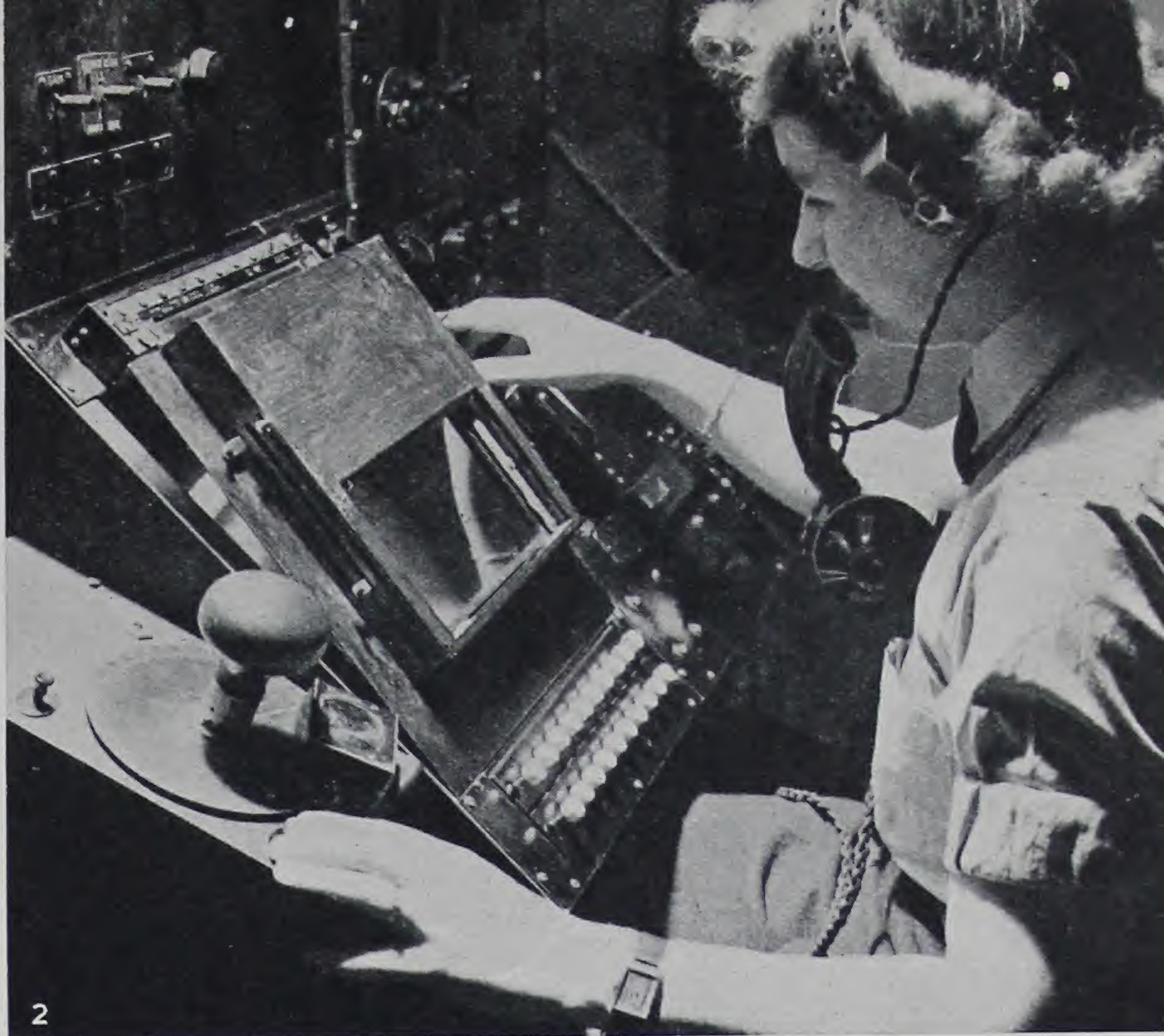
During his trial for war crimes at Nuremberg in May 1946, Admiral Karl Doenitz, who commanded the U-boat service until he became C.-in-C. of the German Navy in 1943, described the Allied use of radar as 'decisive' in the battle against the U-boat. 'It forced us into giving up war on the surface,' he declared. Here, early in the war, is a Wellington bomber of R.A.F. Coastal Command with radar devices on the fuselage and beneath the port wing. *Photo, British Official*





## RADAR'S PART IN AIR SUPREMACY

1. Massive aerial system of a 'ground-controlled interception' radar station in England. The transmitter and receiver were underground. These G.C.I. stations directed R.A.F. fighters until they were sufficiently close to the enemy aircraft for their own airborne radar interception equipment to become effective. 2. An airwoman plots aircraft on the cathode-ray tube (see also page 3546). 3. Interior of a 'Chain Home' receiver room, with console (right) and receiver (left). Among the first types of station used in the defence of Britain, they detected low-flying aircraft. 4. Aerial equipment of a 'Chain Home' coastal station. The arrays were mounted on a steel tower 185 ft. high.







### COASTAL COMMAND 'LIT UP' THE NORTH SEA

Shipfinder Force of R.A.F. Coastal Command in 1944-45 made night hazardous for German convoys in the North Sea. Dropping flares of immense candle-power, radar-equipped Shipfinder Wellingtons silhouetted targets for attacking forces flying in their wake. Here a ground crew loads up a Wellington with drop-flares. A Coastal Command Mosquito touches down in Scotland after attacking enemy shipping in Norwegian waters (top). *Photos, Planet News*

the aircraft circled just out of the U-boat's gunnery range and kept watch. The instant the U-boat began to submerge, the aircraft closed in and depth-charged it. If, by submerging, or in the night, a submarine got away, its known maximum speed could be plotted, so that it was certain that it must be somewhere within a prescribed circular area during the succeeding twenty-four hours; aircraft could then be

detailed to patrol this whole area so that the U-boat could be picked up again when it surfaced. Thus a U-boat, once sighted, seldom escaped, and U-boats began to get the worst of the terror war at sea. Sometimes if surface warships were near enough to the place of action the circling aircraft called them by wireless to aid in the destruction of the submarine by means of their superior gunfire.

A Lancaster carrying centimetric radar crashed at Rotterdam early in 1943. The German Army salvaged the set, but took a year to pass their information—and the secret of the undetectable attack—to the German Navy. Thus it was not until nearly the end of the war that the German Navy, to counteract centimetric radar, introduced the Schnorkel. (See page 3035.) It has been facetiously said that Germany loses her wars because her red tape methods are worse than the British. Here (and fortunately for the Allies), owing to German red tape, this invention came too late in the war seriously to menace Allied seaborne supplies. (For fuller details of the last phases of the U-boat war, see Chapters 342 and 353.)

In addition to the air patrols of the R.A.F. Coastal Command, the Royal Canadian Air Force, and the United States Air Forces engaged on anti-submarine duties above the Atlantic, No. 836 Squadron of the Fleet Air Arm performed unique work. It had 60 aircraft and was entitled to 80 aircrews, and was the biggest squadron in the Naval Air Branch. It provided the aircraft that manned the Merchant Aircraft Carriers (*see illus. in page 3043*), and flew on and off the ships from its base at May Down, near Londonderry. The aircraft were all Swordfish, and they carried depth charges and/or rocket projectiles for action against submarines. These were the aircraft that closed the Atlantic gap; but they did more: they maintained patrol over the convoys they sailed with throughout the ocean crossing, and when the U-boat situation again became serious near the end of the war, right up to the Liverpool Bar Light.

The first M.A.C. ships were grain carrying vessels; later oil tankers and other vessels were used. The first M.A.C. began operating in June 1943, and they continued to be used until the convoy system ended, although their use declined after the Allied acquisition of bases in the Azores (*see page 2656*). The number of M.A.C. ships to a convoy varied from one to four. Grain ships carried four aircraft, the tankers three and some types could carry six. Grain ships had a hangar and a lift to the flight deck, the tankers carried their aircraft on the flying deck, screened by manually removable wind brakes. M.A.C. ships also ferried aircraft across the Atlantic.

M.A.C. ships were manned by Merchant Navy officers and crews, and wore the Red Ensign. The first aircraft to arrive on a M.A.C. ship had the words



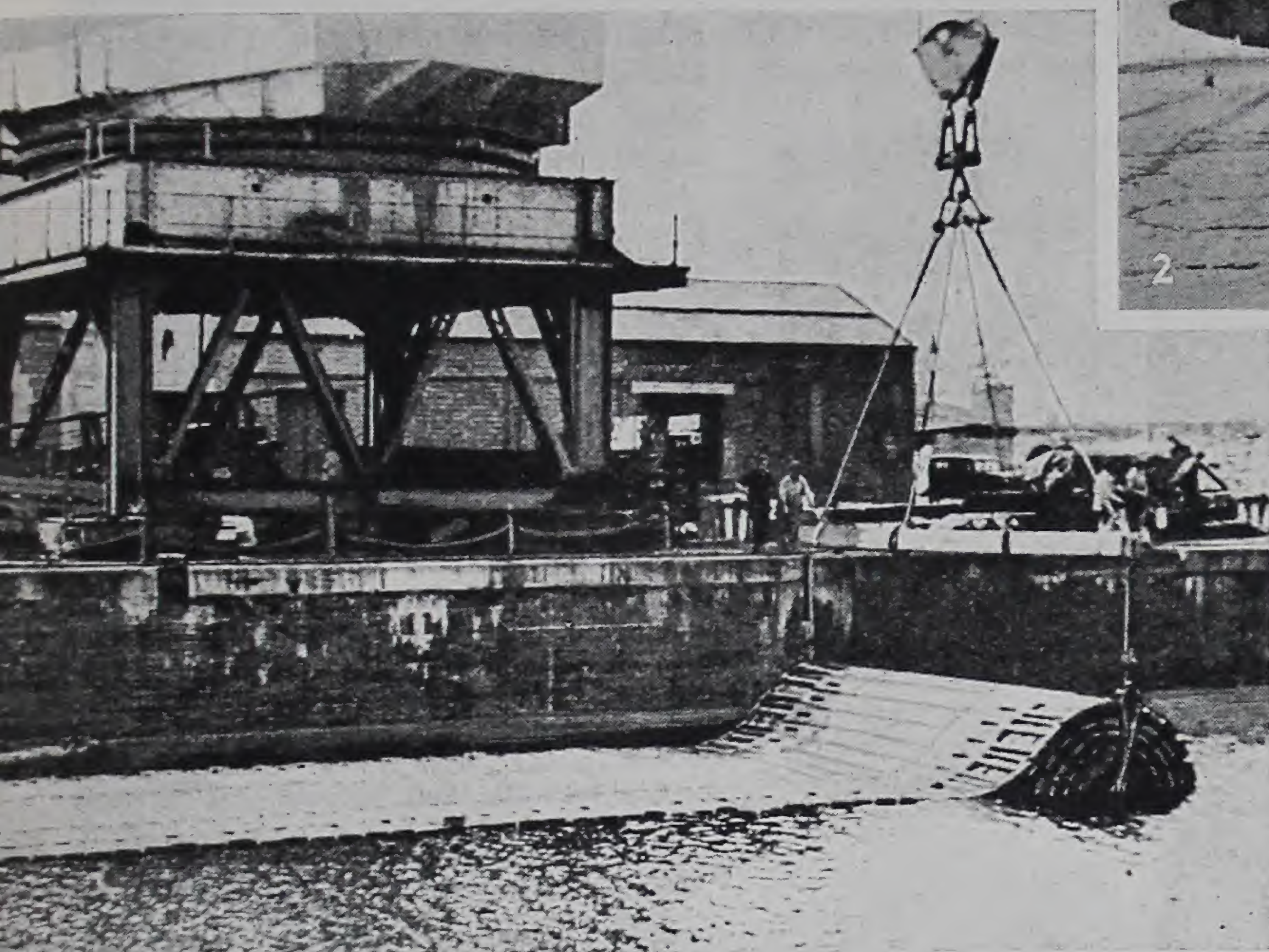
Royal Navy painted out and the words Merchant Navy painted in. But this practice was soon given up, for the use of aircraft in these ships was in principle no different from the mounting of guns in the defensively armed merchant ships which carried naval ratings as gun crews. The Mark III Swordfish carried A.S.V. radar, like that of the Coastal Command aircraft, for anti-submarine search, and were flown by Fleet Air Arm personnel, mostly of the R.N.V.R. branch. These were happy ships, and they played an important part in the safety of the convoys crossing the Atlantic.

British and American heavy bombers continued in 1945 to counter at source the German submarine campaign (see Chapters 342 and 346). The laying of sea mines against surface ships and U-boats by aircraft continued to the end of the war in Europe. Bomber

Command laid 47,250 mines, aggregating 33,263 tons, in enemy waters extending from Bordeaux to the Baltic; these sunk over 550 ships and damaged over 480 others, and kept forty per cent of German naval personnel on mine-sweeping duties. In the Mediterranean and Middle East theatres of war, the Coastal Air Force (see page 3650) laid 1,734 tons of mines.

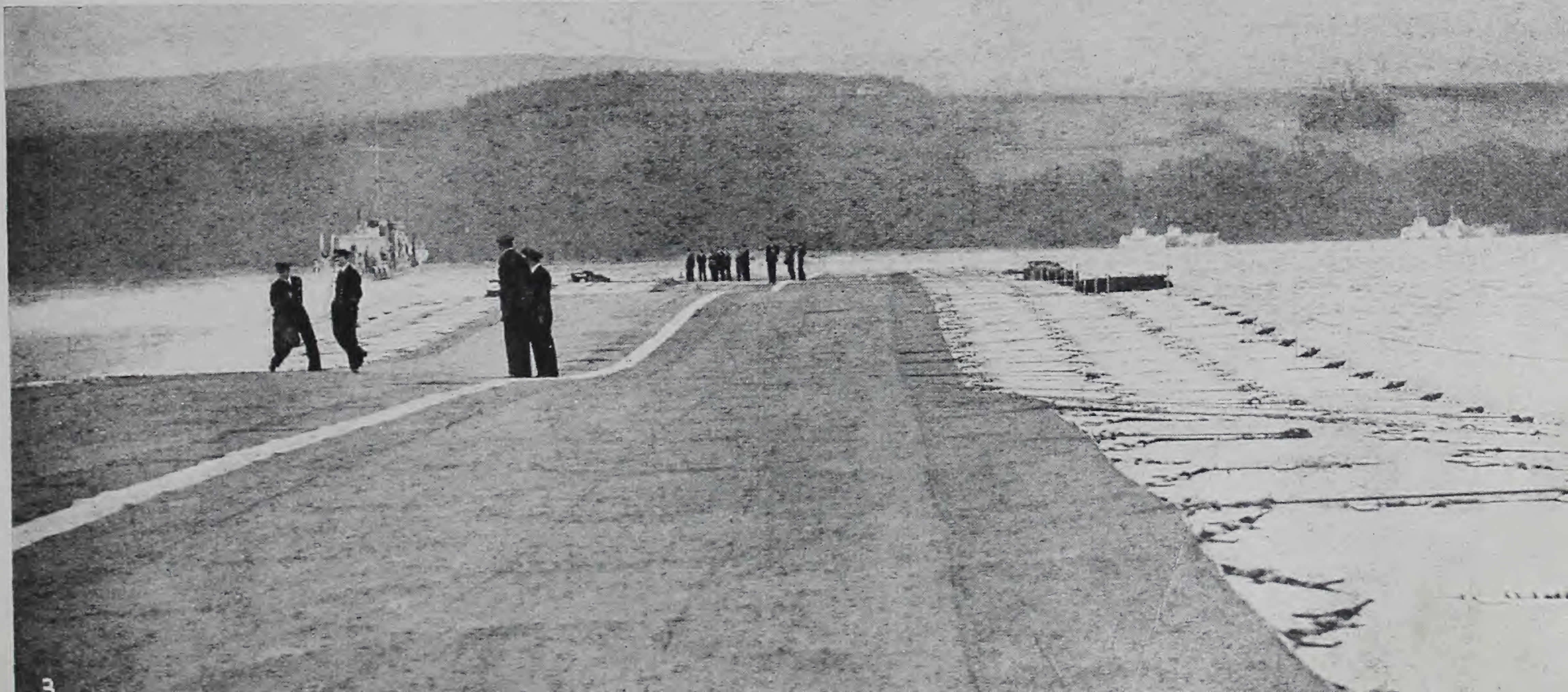
The escort-carriers H.M.S. "Nairana" and H.M.S. "Campania" accompanying the convoys that sailed to Russia had successful air engagements in 1945. On January 30, escorted by ships of the Home Fleet, they attacked shipping and installations on the Norwegian coast north of Stadlandet, damaging three supply ships. On February 16, the Admiralty

announced that the escort of a Russia-bound convoy, which included these two carriers, had sunk at least two U-boats and shot down three German aircraft. Next month another convoy for Archangel, similarly escorted, was persistently attacked despite vile weather. At least one U-boat was sunk; ten enemy torpedo-bombers were shot down and many others damaged. No merchant ships were lost on this outward passage, but six per cent were sunk on the return. On the night of May 4 ships of the Home Fleet with the escort-carriers "Searcher," "Queen" and "Trumpeter"



#### 'LILY', THE FLOATING AIRSTRIIP

Among revolutionary British inventions during the war were the floating airstrip and the floating pier, disclosed in September 1945. Both were invented by Mr. R. M. Hamilton, who had served as a Petty Officer in the Royal Naval Patrol Service. Known as 'Lily,' because like the leaves of the water-lily it rested on the surface, the floating airstrip consisted of buoyancy cans with hexagonal surfaces, so linked that they 'gave' to the motion of the sea, yet remained sufficiently rigid to take the weight of an aircraft. The 'Swiss Roll' flexible canvas-and-wood jetty, which could support a heavily laden lorry, was successfully used at Arromanches (see Chapter 311). 1. Section of 'Swiss Roll' being laid. 2. A Swordfish touches down on 'Lily.' 3. Experimenting with 'Lily' at Lamlash, Scotland.





attacked enemy shipping near Narvik. One U-boat depot ship and a tanker were sunk, and a U-boat probably sunk; two A.A. vessels were damaged for the loss of two aeroplanes.

Radar was used by Coastal Command aircraft to attack surface as well as submarine ships. From Stornoway,

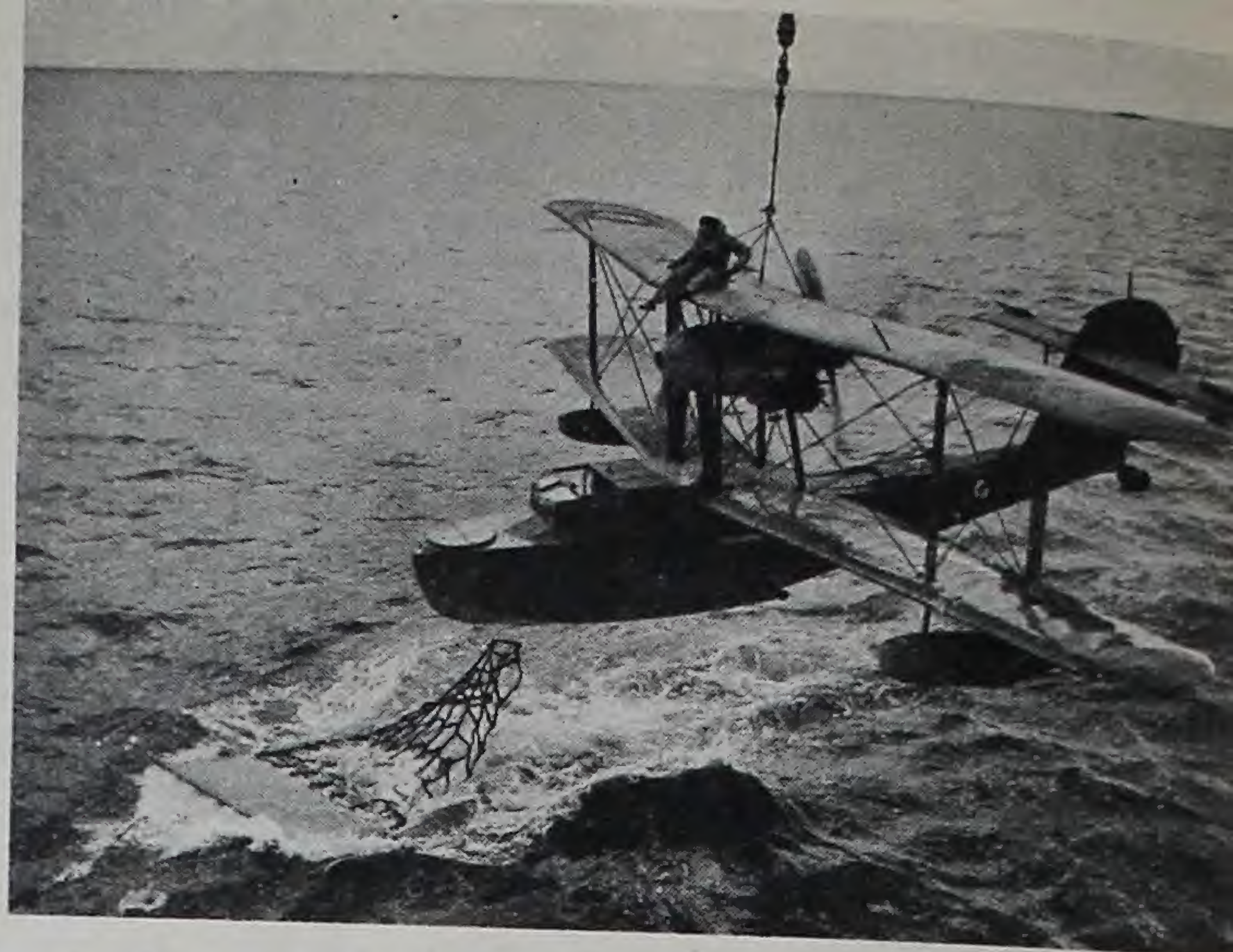
#### Attacks on Enemy Coastal Shipping

Lewis, the aircrews of Nos. 58 and 502 squadrons flew their Halifax bombers to the Skager Rak and Kattegat, where, after locating the German convoys by radar, they lighted up the ships with powerful flares. They released their bombs from between 3,500 and 4,000 feet, and when the war ended thousands of tons of enemy shipping had been either sunk or seriously damaged. During January 1945 enemy shipping was attacked six times—in Lyse Fjord on January 8, off the Norwegian coast on January 9, in Leirvik harbour on January 15, and Edj Fjord on January 26; on the 17th and

#### HOOKING A WALRUS

Important feature of training in the Fleet Air Arm was that of catapulting aircraft from warships and recovering them from the water. In the 'Towed Net' method of recovery the aircraft taxied on to a towed net, hooked on to it and was hoisted inboard when under the ship's hook. Here, a Walrus aircraft is being hoisted on board after casting off the net.

*Photo, British Official*



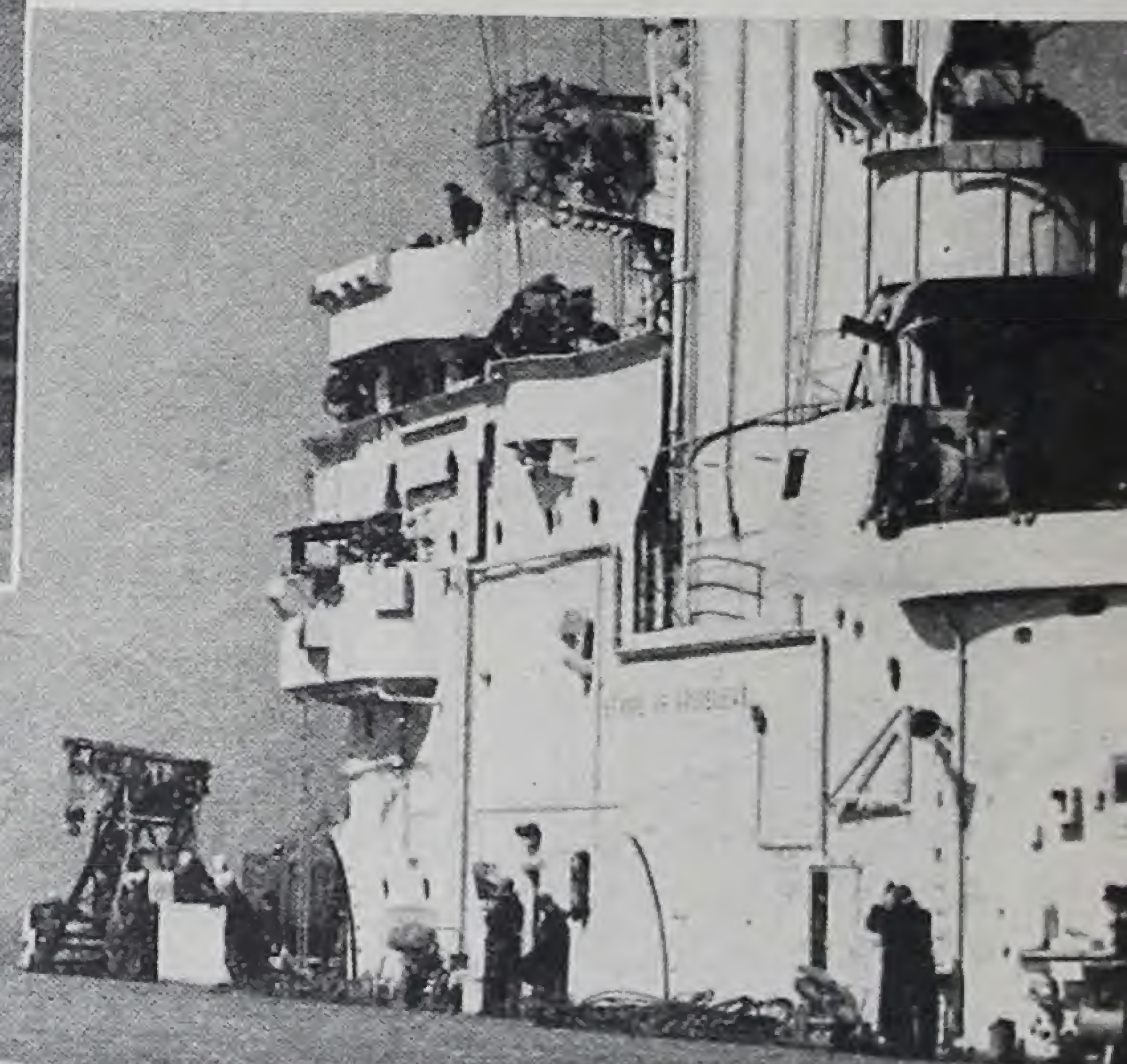
24th targets were found off the Dutch and German North Sea coasts. In February there were three attacks, on the 9th in Forde Fjord, and on the 4th and 24th in the Baltic.

In March eight attacks were made, three off the Norwegian coast (20th, 24th and 30th); two in the Kattegat

(7th and 27th); two in the Skager Rak (25th and 27th) and one at Aalesund (17th). In April the volume of enemy traffic between Norway and Germany increased (some ships carrying reinforcements from Norway to Germany, others taking refugees from north German ports), and Coastal Command made thirteen shipping attacks that month—five in the Skager Rak (4th, 9th, 10th, 19th and 25th); four in the Kattegat (2nd, 4th, 10th and 19th); and one each on the 2nd, 11th, and 14th respectively in Sande Fjord, Norwegian coastal waters, Josing Fjord, and on the 25th a sweep between the Hook of Holland and the Heligoland Bight. The planning of these attacks, which

#### SWORDFISH'S LAST FLIGHT

The Fairey Swordfish was the only British aircraft to remain fully operational in its original form throughout the war. Carrier-borne, it crippled over a million tons of enemy shipping. Last official flight of a Swordfish was made on October 15, 1945, from H.M.S. 'Ocean.' Below, the final take-off. Left, Vice-Admiral Sir Denis Boyd, Admiral (Air), and Rear-Admiral M. S. Slattery, Vice-Controller (Air), Chief of Naval Air Equipment, who made the last flight.







*Photo, aerial view*

#### LAST OPERATION AGAINST THE GERMAN NAVY

In the end of the war, the Germans perished, from their base in Norway, in their planned attacks on Allied merchant convoys in Russia. Last offensive operation undertaken by the Royal Navy against the German Navy was a heavy attack on May 2, 1945, on enemy shipping, including a battleship and a submarine. It took 10 days to sink the ships. During the attack, 100,000 tons of goods were lost up to the coast. Many convoys were sunk from the north of the coast. U.S.S. "Puma" sunk on Russian coast, by May 2, 1945, for the operation of attack.





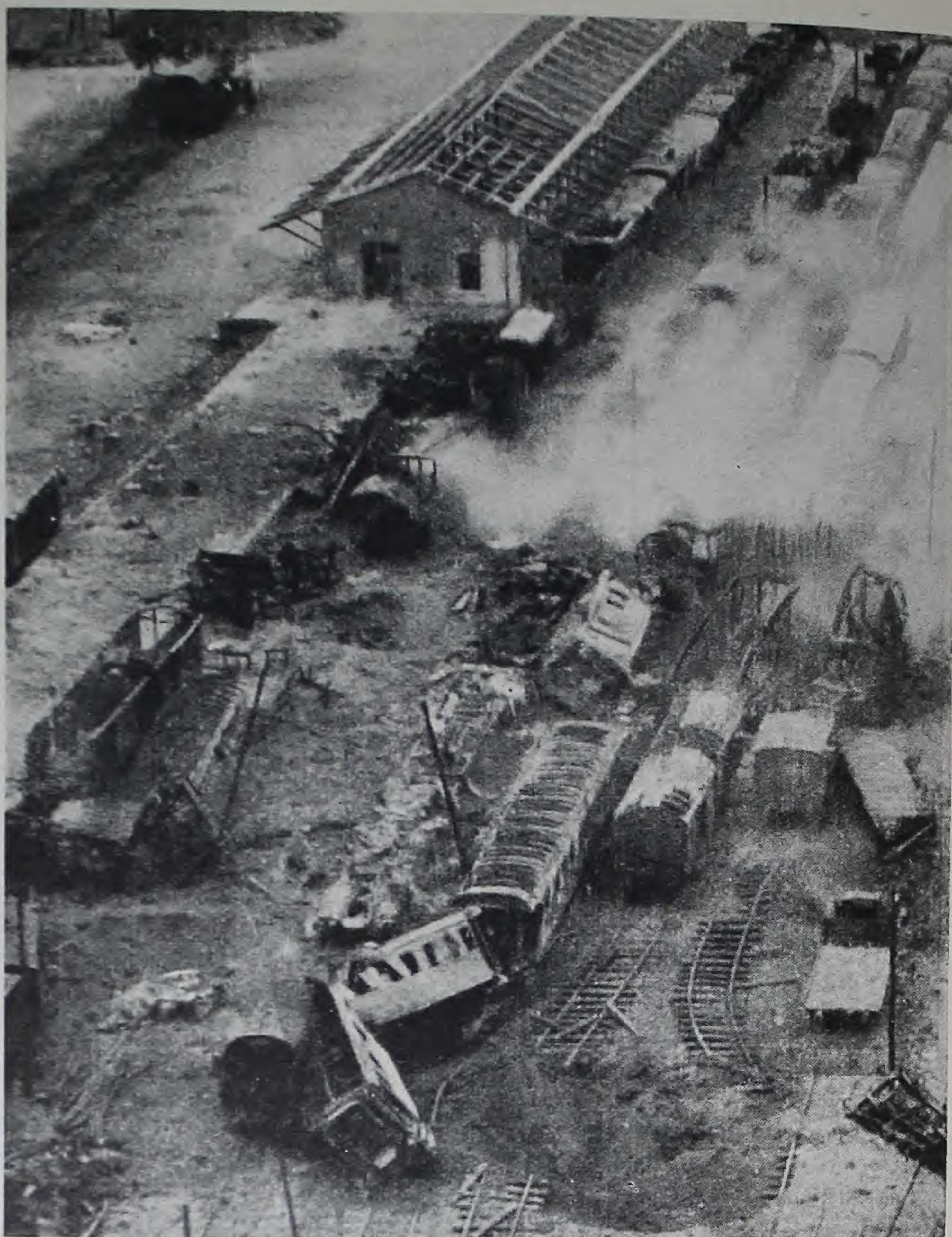
were successful in sinking or disabling a large number of enemy vessels, required the constant vigilance of reconnaissance aircraft over the narrowing coastal belt still in enemy hands. The ships attacked included destroyers, escort vessels, U-boats, minesweepers, and merchant ships.

In the last days of the fighting there was a great exodus from north German ports to Norway. From April 29 to May 3 inclusive, aircraft of the R.A.F. 2nd T.A.F. put out of action 150 ships, including many U-boats trying to escape, and in the 48 hours before the German unconditional surrender to Field-Marshal Montgomery, Coastal Command aircraft, engaged almost non-stop against them, put out of action nearly 50 vessels, including two destroyers and a number of armed auxiliaries. During attacks just before fighting ended, a new success was scored by the sinking of two U-boats by rocket and cannon fire.

After the surrender the work of Coastal Command continued without pause, shepherding enemy vessels to port, on the watch for submarines that might not have heard their orders, and escorting Allied convoys, with everything at the ready, but without the explosion of depth charges or the rattle of gunfire. Anti-submarine

#### LAST DAYS IN ITALY

In April 1945, as the German front in north Italy crumbled, Allied air attacks on enemy communications—especially on the vital railway system—were stepped up. Here is the marshalling-yard at the Italian railway keypoint of Parma after it had been heavily bombed by P-47 Thunderbolts of the U.S.A. 12th A.F. *Photo, U.S. Official*



#### GERMANS QUIT GREECE

Fearing the cutting of their escape routes into Central Europe, the Germans still occupying Greece began a mass evacuation in September 1944. In this their movements were accelerated by the M.A.A.F. and by big guns of the Royal Navy. Below, enemy A.A. gunners on the Greek coast run to their positions as Allied aircraft approach—a photograph seized among Dr. Goebbels's private collection.







#### COMMANDING M.A.A.F.

Lieutenant-General John K. Cannon was appointed in the spring of 1945 to succeed Lieutenant-General Ira C. Eaker as C.-in-C. of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces. This comprised the Mediterranean Strategic Air Force, Tactical Air Force, Coastal Air Force and the Balkan Air Force. As Major-General, he had been appointed Commanding General of the U.S.A. 12th A.F., Mediterranean, in January 1944.

*Photo, British Official*

patrols and protection to convoys continued until June 4, when the Command completed its last patrol of the European war with the arrival in North Ireland of the last homeward bound convoy.

During the war, Coastal Command dropped 4,778 tons of bombs and depth charges and laid 602 tons of mines.

#### EX-PRISONERS RETURN BY AIR

In the House of Commons on May 29, 1945, Mr. Churchill stated that to date 156,000 British Commonwealth prisoners of war had been repatriated (over 140,000 by air), with another 10,000 awaiting repatriation in the British and U.S. zones, 8,500 in that part of Austria held by the Red Army, and 400 at Odessa. Here a group of returned P.O.W. leave the Lancaster of R.A.F. Transport Command that ferried them to England from Germany. Besides Lancasters, Dakotas and Fortresses were regularly used for this service.

*Photo, Barratt's*

Its unceasing vigilance had cost 1,479 aircraft; it had destroyed 175 enemy aircraft. The value of its work, however, was not to be measured by these figures, but by the millions of tons of supplies and millions of men transported safely across the seas through the vigilance of the air force and the navy despite the attacks of a powerful and unscrupulous enemy.

In the summer of 1944, after the ground forces in Italy had been depleted in preparation for the landings on the Riviera (see page 3456), Field-Marshal Alexander gave permission for the bridges across the river Po to be cut in order to increase the enemy's difficulties of communication. Previously he had not allowed the air force to destroy these bridges, for he had hoped to capture them intact by the use of airborne troops. There were 23 rail and road bridges (including a few pontoon bridges) over the Po and its tributary the Trebbia. Tactical aircraft began the attack on July 12, 1944, and seventy-two hours later every bridge was out of action. One or more spans were knocked out of all permanent bridges, and pontoons from all floating bridges lay stranded on the river banks for miles downstream. The enemy was forced to rely on small emergency bridges, which he used mostly at night, dismounting them and hiding them by day to conserve them from fighter-bombers for further nocturnal use. During the winter of 1944-45 Allied tactical aircraft in Italy were

often weather bound, but as frequently as possible they pounded the enemy communications and supply dumps.

Allied air forces in Italy continued to attack the enemy in the Balkans, concentrating on shipping, motor transport, bridges, airfields, and radar stations in continuation of the general policy to assist Marshal Tito's forces, contain German divisions there which the enemy badly needed elsewhere, and prevent the Luftwaffe from operating with any success from Balkan territory against the Allies in Italy, the Yugoslav partisans, or the Red Army. These duties were undertaken by the Balkan Air Force—a component of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces—established in June 1944, with British, Yugoslav, Italian, Greek, and Polish personnel.

The spring offensive in Italy began on April 9, 1945, across the Senio river west of Ravenna, after heavy bomber and artillery preparation. The German armies south of the Po were unable to retreat

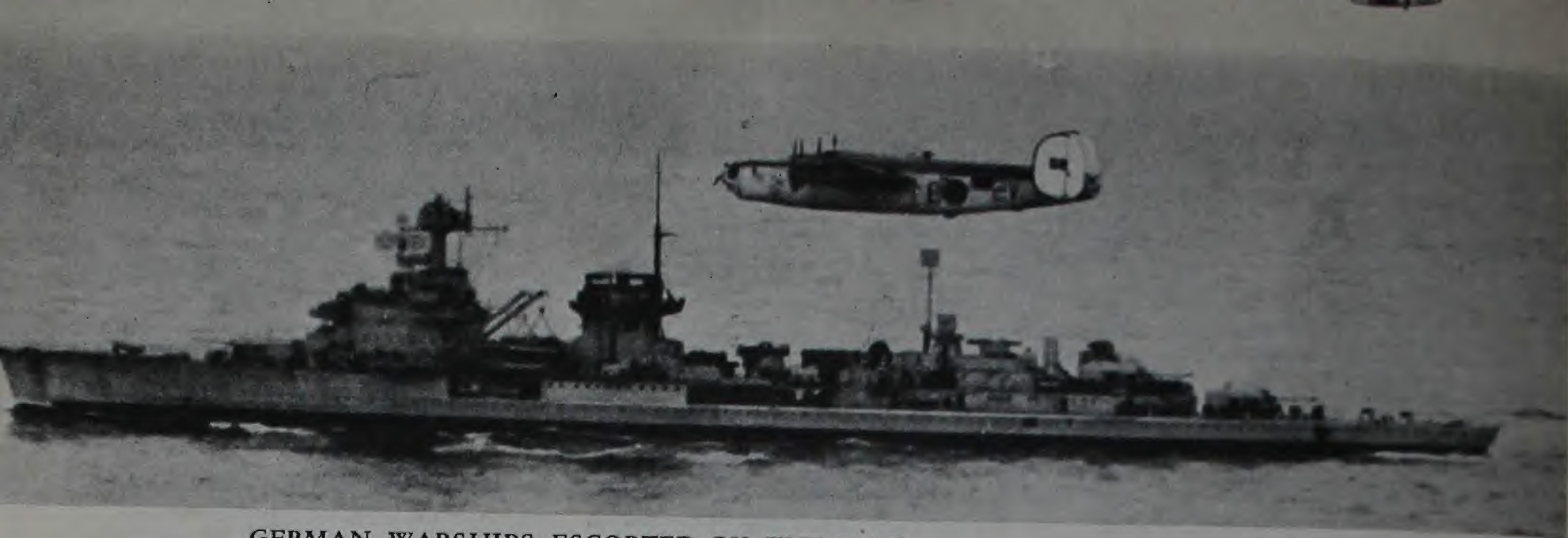
#### Air Aid for Last Italian Offensive

owing to the murderous air assault upon their communications, and were virtually destroyed there. The complete collapse of resistance in Italy quickly followed, creating a military triumph, never before achieved, of conquest of the peninsula from the south.

The air force which contributed to the defeat of the German armies in Italy was called the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces. It was created in December 1943 soon after the airfields







### GERMAN WARSHIPS ESCORTED BY THE R.A.F.

After Germany's unconditional surrender in May 1945, the famous German cruiser 'Nürnberg' (seen above) sailed with the 'Prinz Eugen' from Copenhagen, where they had been berthed, to Wilhelmshaven. They were under a British escort, which included Liberators of R.A.F. Coastal Command. The two ships were among units of the German Navy, including four destroyers and some 130 warships of various types, taken over by the Royal Navy at Copenhagen.

at Foggia came into Allied use. M.A.A.F. contained more than 250,000 officers and other ranks, who wore the uniforms of many nations. Australia, Brazil, Britain, Canada, France, Greece, Poland, South Africa, the United States, and Yugoslavia were all represented in this force, which at its peak, reached between August and September 1944, contained 173,845 U.S.A.A.F. and 68,896 R.A.F. personnel.

It was divided into four operational entities: the Strategic Air Force, the Tactical Air Force, the Coastal Air Force, and the Balkan Air Force. The complete force was commanded by Lieutenant-General Ira C. Eaker until the spring of 1945 when Lieutenant-General John K. Cannon succeeded him. The first deputy commander was Air Marshal Sir John Slessor, from whom Air Marshal Sir Guy Garrod took over in March 1945.

The strategic air force could dispatch 850 escorted heavy bombers against German war production, and attacked targets in twelve different countries. It averaged a weekly bomb load of almost 4,000 tons. It cut one-third of Germany's oil supplies by destroying the Rumanian oilfield production. It brought back a thousand missing airmen from Bucharest after that city's liberation by the Red Army.

The tactical air force made a major contribution to the success of the Allied army's advance up the peninsula from Naples into Tuscany by cutting the German supply system through continual attacks on the three vulnerable railway tracks in a plan called "Operation Strangle."

The complete force dropped over 650,000 tons of bombs on enemy

targets, and destroyed more than 8,700 enemy aircraft. More than 9,000 Allied aircraft were lost, and the killed, wounded, missing and prisoners of war totalled about 40,000. Field-Marshal Alexander announced on July 31, 1945, that M.A.A.F. would end that night. Thereafter the American and British air forces in Italy separated from their unified command, into distinctive organizations for the armies of occupation.

The main preoccupation of home defence in Britain during 1945 centred in the organization to meet the V-weapon attack. (See Chapter 337.) Radar watch was maintained along all the coasts of Britain, for there was always the possibility that a last desperate attempt to bomb Britain might be made by the Luftwaffe in a final act of spite.

But only four comparatively small piloted attacks were made against Britain in 1945. All came in March. On the night of the 2nd-3rd scattered attacks were made, in which bombs were dropped and machine-guns and cannon-guns were used indiscriminately against towns, villages and railways in the midlands and north; six of the attacking aircraft were shot down. Next night a number of enemy-piloted aircraft again attacked England. On the 16th-17th piloted aircraft came in across the coast of north England and dropped fragmentation bombs which caused casualties and damage; and three nights later, when a small number of aircraft raided southern England, one was shot down. The Luftwaffe had shot its last missile against Britain. And to do so it had to use a wide variety of aircraft to make up its small forces, including Junkers 188, Messerschmitt 410, Dornier 217, and Focke Wulf 190, a sure sign of the decline and fall of the German air force.

### MAJOR TARGETS IN 1945 OF THE STRATEGIC AIR FORCE BASED IN ITALY

#### January

- 8 Targets at Linz (Austria).
- 15 Objectives in the Vienna area.
- 20 Railyards at Linz and Salzburg; oil storage at Regensburg.
- 31 Oil plants at Moosbierbaum (N.W. of Vienna) and railyards at Graz and Maribor.

#### February

- 13 Rail centres and communications at Vienna, Graz, and Maribor.
- 16 Obertraubling aerodrome at Regensburg (jet-propelled Me. 262 base).
- 20 Berchtesgaden (attacked for the first time in the War) and neighbouring railways.
- 27 Augsburg railways.

#### March

- 1 Moosbierbaum oil refinery.
- 4 Rail targets in Hungary, Austria, and Yugoslavia.
- 9 Graz (Austria).
- 12 Oil installations in the Vienna area.
- 13 Objectives at Regensburg.
- 14 Oil and railway objectives in Hungary (jointly with the Red Air Force).
- 21 Jet plane base at Neuberg and oil refineries in Vienna area.

#### March—continued

- 22 Oil plants at Ruhland (near Dresden), near Prague, near Vienna, and railways in Austria.
- 24 Berlin (first attack by M.A.A.F.) and airfields near Munich.
- 31 Railways in Austria leading to Italy; Graz, in support of Marshal Tolbukhin.

#### April

- 1 Targets in Austria and Yugoslavia, in support of the Red Army.
- 2 Targets in Austria in direct co-operation with the Red Army.
- 9 Forward positions of the German Army opposite the 8th Army: to prevent bombs falling on Allied troops, huge white arrows were dotted all over the 8th Army area pointing northwards, lines of white, amber, and red smoke covered an area up to five miles behind the Allied front, and low altitude A.A. fire was maintained along the front line.
- 21 Rosenheim and Puchheim on the Munich-Salzburg-Linz railway.
- 25 Concentration of rolling stock at Linz.





#### GERMAN SERVICES CHIEFS SIGN THE SURRENDER

On the outskirts of Berlin on May 8, 1945 (see also page 3639), the heads of the German fighting forces ratified the unconditional surrender terms. Above, left to right, Colonel-General P. F. Stumpf, appointed C.-in-C., the Luftwaffe Reich, after the attempt on Hitler's life in July 1944 ; Field-Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, Chief of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht ; and Admiral Hans Georg von Friedeburg, C.-in-C. of the German Navy, who committed suicide on May 23. Below, Air Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder and Marshal Zhukov sign on behalf of the Allied Expeditionary Force and the Russian High Command respectively. On Sir Arthur's right is Mr. A. Vyshinsky, Soviet Vice-Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

*Photos, U.S. Official ; Pictorial Press*





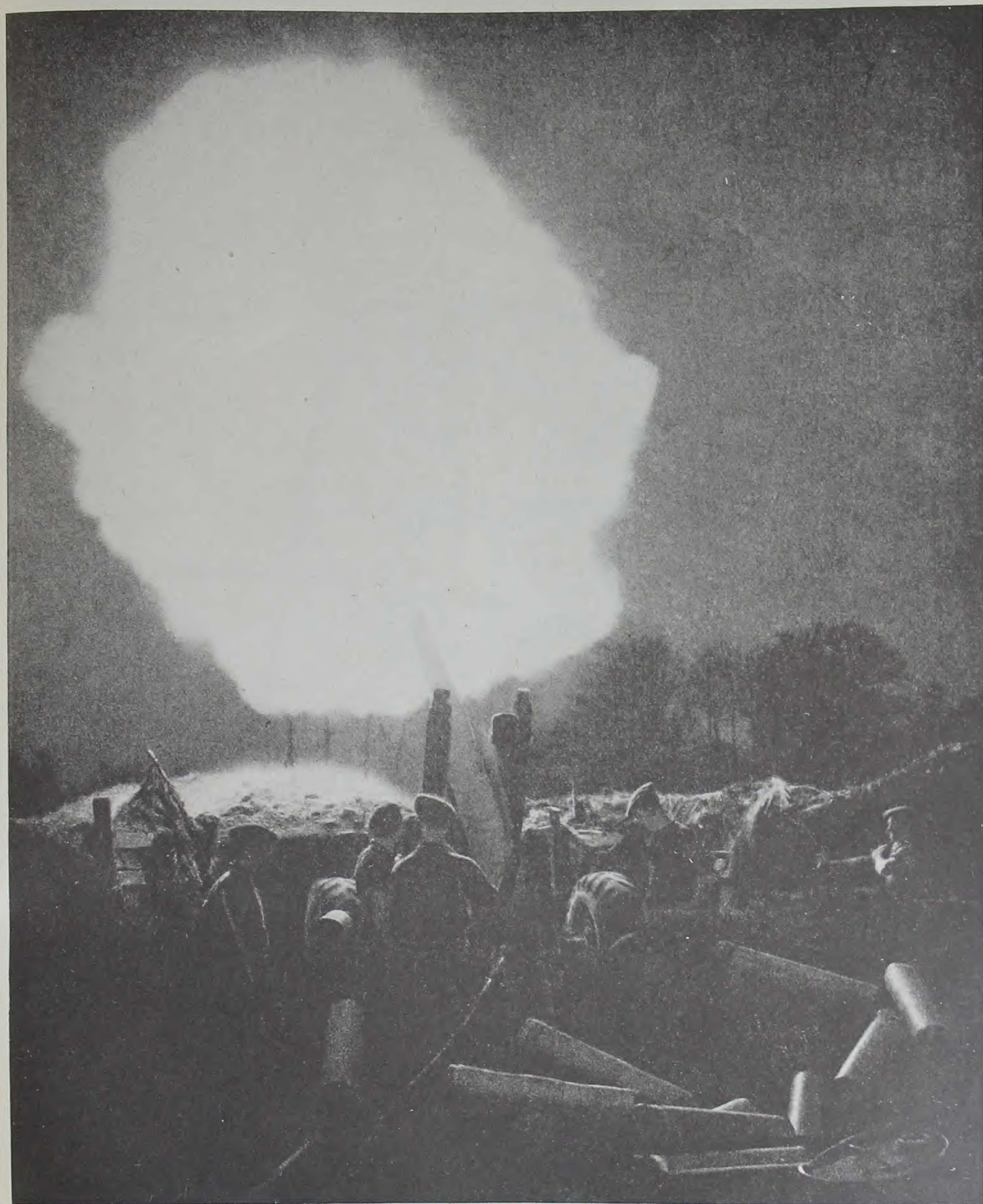


*Photo, British Official*

#### BALKAN AIR FORCE STRIKES IN YUGOSLAVIA

The formation was announced on August 4, 1944, of the Balkan Air Force—a new composite group of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces 'for the centralization of the conduct of air operations in the Balkans, except strategic bombing, and for the intensification of air operations in the Adriatic.' Air Vice-Marshal William Elliott, formerly A.O.C., Gibraltar, was appointed its A.O.C. Here a South African Air Force Squadron serving with the Balkan Air Force attacks with rocket-firing Beaufighters targets in the German-occupied town of Zuzemberk, Yugoslavia, early in 1945.





*Photo, British Official*

### **MONTGOMERY BLASTS HIS WAY ACROSS THE RHINE**

Under cover of a devastating four-hour air and artillery bombardment—typical of Montgomery's major-assault tactics—21st Army Group stormed the Rhine in bright moonlight on the night of March 23-24, 1945 (see page 3658). Feature of the great assault was the use of a new type of shell, specially designed to deal with German A.A. gun positions. In this greatest barrage of the war, over 1,500 guns—from the lighter Bofors to the 8-inch 'heavies'—took part. Here a 5.5-in. British gun on the west bank of the Rhine blasts targets across the river as a prelude to the crossings.



# 21st ARMY GROUP CROSSES THE RHINE

*The last stages of the campaign of the Army Group under Field-Marshal Montgomery's command are here described by the Military Editor, Major-General Sir Charles Gwynn, who tells the history of the simultaneous campaigns of the Army Groups under American command in Chapter 369. This chapter culminates in the surrender on Lüneburg Heath on May 4—second German surrender in the field, second also to a British commander*

**B**y the elimination of the German pocket at Wesel, Field-Marshal Montgomery's 21st Army Group (composed at that time of the 1st Canadian, British 2nd and U.S. 9th Armies) reached the Rhine on March 10 along the whole of its front (see page 3572). The U.S. 1st and 3rd Armies had by the same date also lined up on the west bank of the river as far south as the mouth of the Moselle, the former having unexpectedly secured a footing on the east bank at Remagen on March 8 (see pages 3572-73).

The stage was therefore set for the final phase of the plan which, back on the Seine in the preceding August, General Eisenhower and Field-Marshal (then General) Montgomery had formed. Under that plan, the main objects were to be the occupation of the Ruhr and the defeat of the German armies in mobile operations in the plains of north-western Germany.

To attain these objects, the Rhine would have to be crossed in force somewhere in the reaches between Düsseldorf and Emmerich. That was the chief pre-arranged operation to be carried out at the gateway to the decisive area, although no doubt it was also intended to develop a threat along the whole length of the river, and to take advantage of such opportunities as arose of thrusting into southern Germany, bringing the enemy to battle and causing him to disperse his forces.

Upstream of Cologne, however, the nature of the country, especially to the east of the river, made it difficult to decide in advance where attempts to force a crossing might be made. Moreover there was no other objective of the same immediate and decisive importance as the Ruhr to influence a decision.

The Rhine notoriously is everywhere a highly defensible obstacle, wide, swift-flowing and, in its upper reaches, dominated by rugged high ground; but in the reaches north of Düsseldorf selected for the main attack its width, some 600 to 700 yards, its depth of 20 to 25 feet, and its current of three to five miles an hour present an exceptional

problem, both in relation to securing initial footings across the river and to establishing bridges for the passage and maintenance of the main force.

In the face of the weapons of the day, it was clear that landing craft of much the same type would be needed as in an amphibious seaborne enterprise; while for the construction of bridges an immense quantity of engineering equipment would be necessary. After careful experiments on British, French and Belgian rivers most resembling the Rhine in banks and currents, it was decided to use in the main two types of craft for the operation, the L.C.M. (Landing Craft Mechanized) and the L.C.V.P. (Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel) as being best suited to maintain a fast cross-river service of tanks, mobile guns and bulldozers. Both these craft have bows which can be lowered to form ramps for loading and unloading and possess an extremely fast "turn round." The L.C.M., 50 feet long, had a speed of 12 knots and could

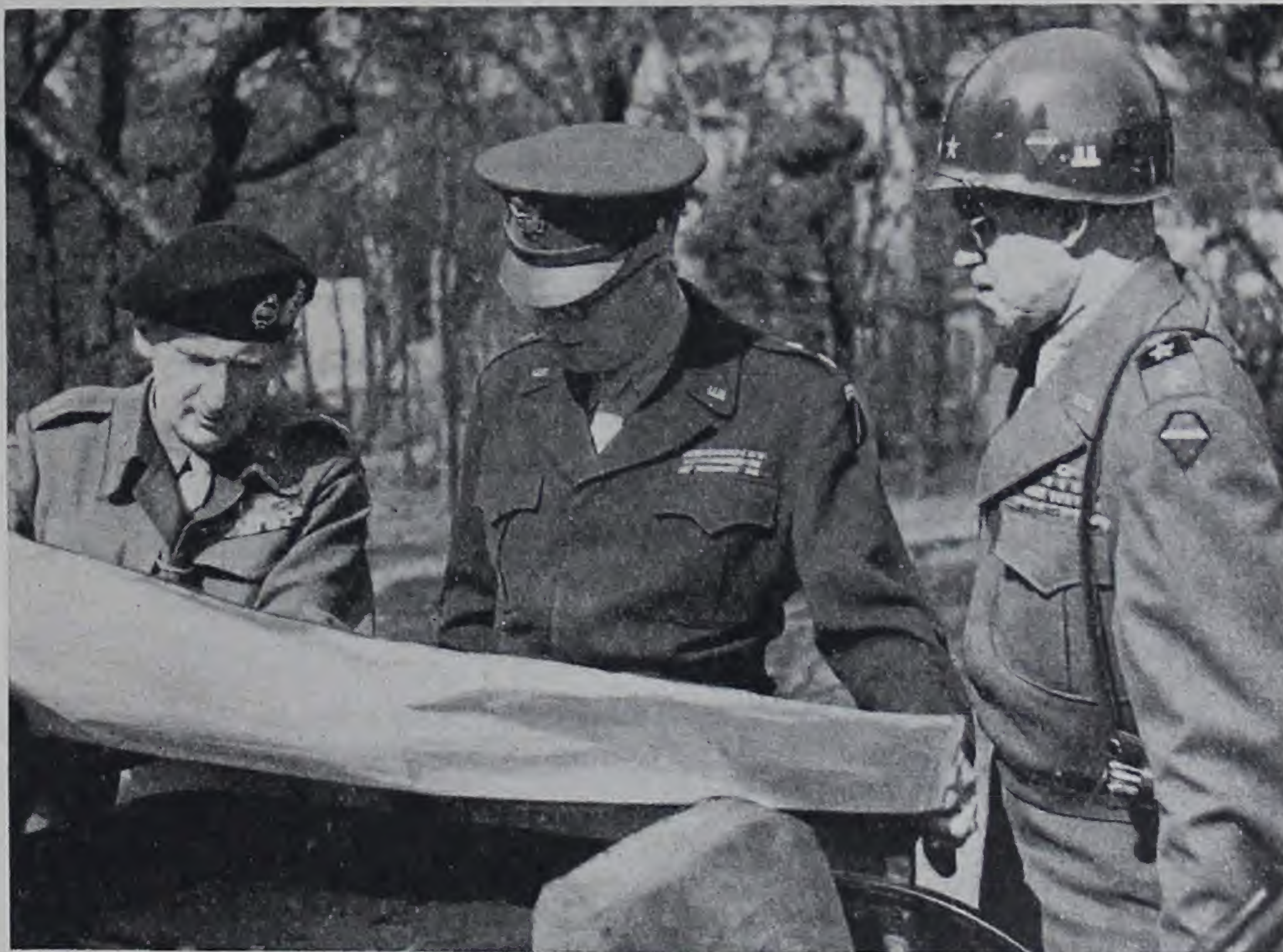
carry a crew of five and the equivalent of a Sherman tank; the L.C.V.P., 36 feet long, with a 10-knot speed and a crew of four, could carry 40 fully equipped troops, a bulldozer, or 1,000 gallons of petrol.

The situation was complicated by the fact that the Maas had also to be bridged, which involved some delay in the build-up of material resources between the two rivers. Nevertheless it was essential to undertake the crossing as soon as possible in order to give the enemy no time to recover from his losses in the Ardennes offensive (see Chapter 336) and the subsequent battle of the Rhineland (see Chapter 349).

The failure in September 1944 of the airborne attempt to secure a bridge-head at Arnhem (see Chapter 325) left no alternative but to seek a solution to the problem of the crossing of the Rhine by deliberate methods. Even before Rundstedt's Ardennes offensive, a start had

**Need for  
Rapid  
Build-up**

**Gateway to  
North-West  
Germany**



## PLANNING THE RHINE CROSSINGS

All three Armies of 21st Army Group took part in the Rhine crossing on the night of March 23-24, 1945. British 2nd, under General Dempsey; 1st Canadian, under General Crerar; and U.S. 9th, under General Simpson. The operation was under the overall command of Field-Marshal Montgomery, here seen just before the crossings with General Eisenhower, Supreme Commander, A.E.F., and Lieutenant-General Omar Bradley, commanding 12th Army Group.

*Photo, British Official*

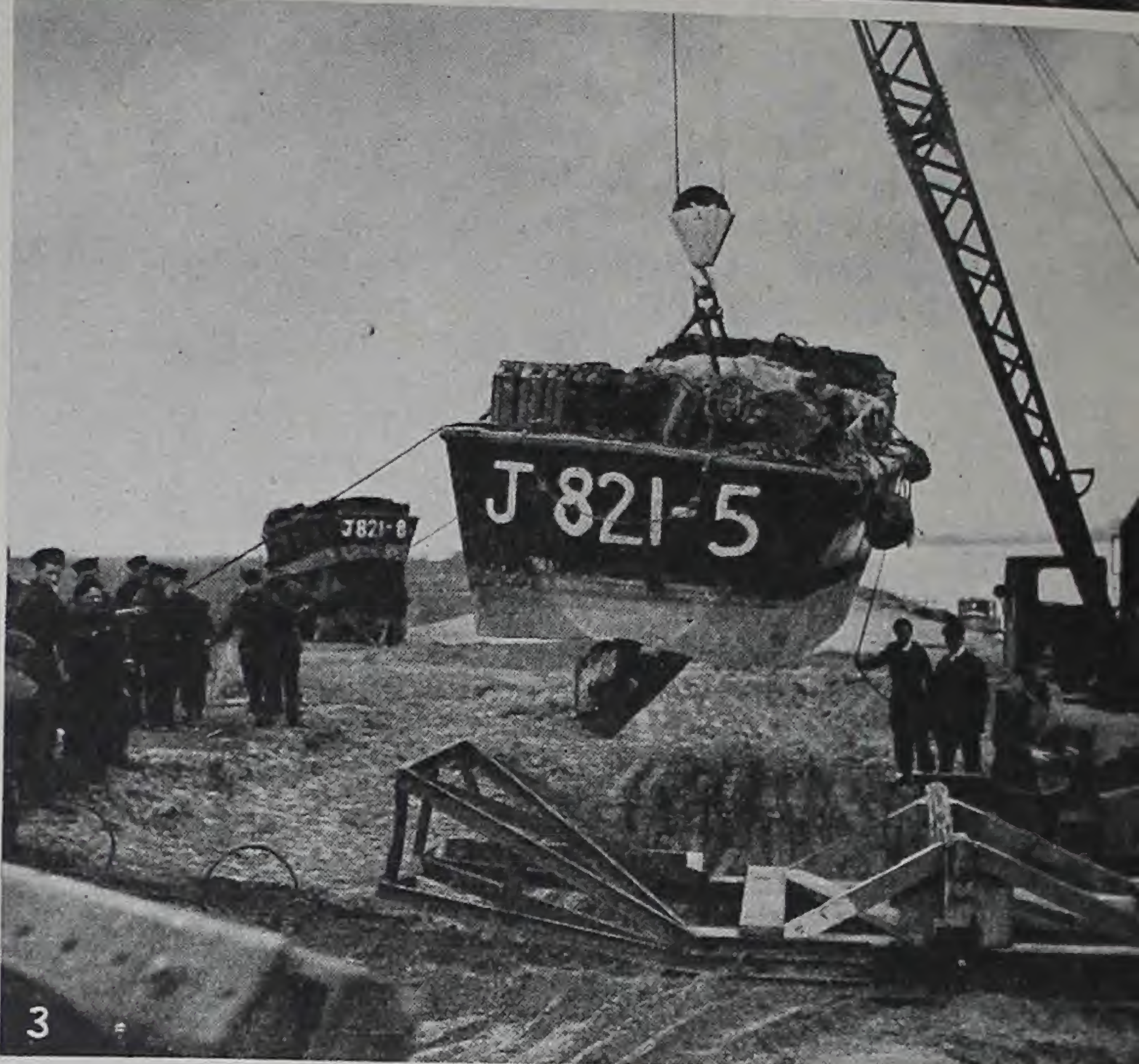




#### BRITISH AIRBORNE TROOPS CROSS DORTMUND-EMS CANAL

It was announced on April 2, 1945, that the British 6th Airborne Division had crossed the famous 150-mile Dortmund-Ems Canal ten miles south of Osnabrück, and, in a 15-mile advance beyond Münster, had reached Lengerich in the province of Hanover. Although the retreating Germans had destroyed the remaining bridges, thanks to the R.A.F.'s persistent smashing of the waterway's banks the water in some sections was only knee-deep and the crossings were made on foot. Here a stretcher-party carries a wounded man back across the canal beside a partially demolished bridge.





### MONTGOMERY'S MEN HEAD FOR THE RHINE

The Rhine crossings of March 23-24, 1945, on a 25-mile front north of the Ruhr, were made by assault troops of 21st Army Group in a great flotilla of 'Buffaloes' and other amphibious craft under a shattering bombardment and dense smoke-screens. 1. Amphibious lorries ('Dukws') in a Rhineland wood where equipment was concentrated before the crossings. 2. Mounted on 'Buffaloes,' these jeep ambulances approach the banks of the great German river. 3. Mobile crane-party of the Royal Navy lift a loaded landing-craft from a transporter on the Rhine. 4. Laying the dense smoke-screens to cover the crossings which took place, for the most part, in bright moonlight.

*Photos, British Official; Keystone*



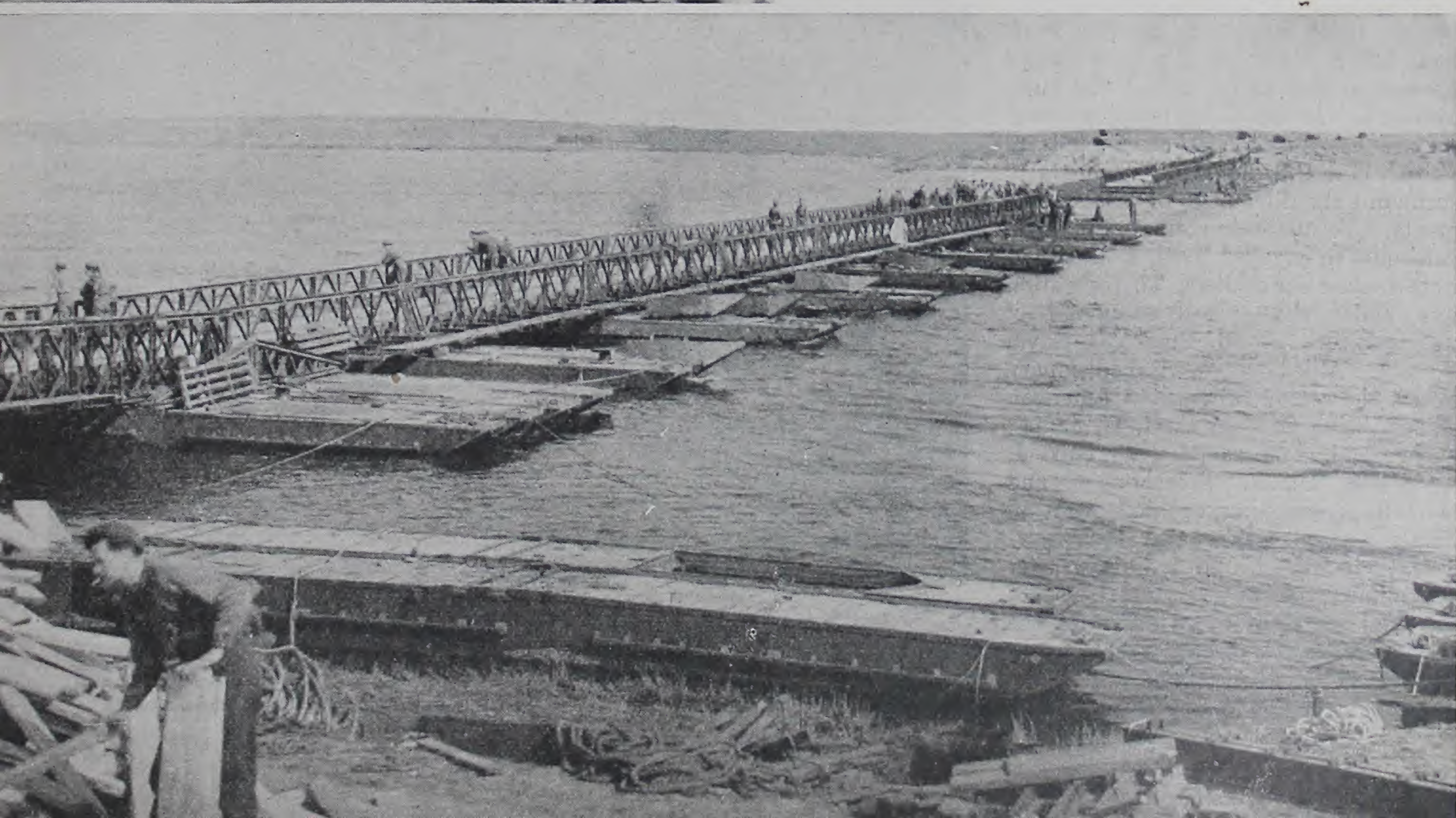




#### REICH'S LAST WESTERN BARRIER STORMED

1. In the early dawn of March 24 British troops board assault craft for the Rhine crossing. Banks of the smoke-screens tower in the background. 2. A 'Buffalo' (extreme right), with a R.A.F. party on board, crosses the Rhine under the shadow of a bridge at Wesel which had been blown up by the retreating enemy. 3. Units of the 15th (Scottish) Division scramble ashore, heading for an assembly-point. 4. First Bailey pontoon-bridge to be constructed across the Rhine. Built opposite Xanten and 1,500-feet long, it was the work of VIII Corps Engineers who completed it in exactly 13 hours.

*Photos, British Official*





launched on the front Rees-Xanten-Wesel-Dinslaken. The first crossing was made at 9 p.m. in bright moonlight by assault troops in a great flotilla of Buffaloes and other amphibious craft. Four main bridge-heads were established: by the 51st (Highland) Division at Rees, by the 15th (Scottish) opposite Xanten, by the British 1st Commando Brigade at Wesel, and by the U.S. 9th Army (whose spearheads were the 30th and 79th Infantry Divisions) in the area of Dinslaken, some miles north of Duisburg. Wesel, as an important communication centre the key to the crossing, was captured by the Commando Brigade: it had been devastated by earlier air and artillery bombardments.

By the morning footings on the heavily mined east bank had been secured and reinforcements were

#### Units which Made the Crossing

being ferried across on the whole front of attack. These included, as well as men

of the units already mentioned, the 79th Armoured Division, The Black Watch, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, Royal Berkshire Regiment, The Royals, Cheshire Regiment, 81st Field Artillery Regiment, Highland Light Infantry, Canadian H.L.I., Manchester Regiment, Royal Scots Fusiliers, Royal Scots, King's Own Scottish Borderers, Royal Tank Regiment (men of the 5th Royal Tank Regiment manning the Buffaloes carrying the troops

in the first assault), Gordon Highlanders, Middlesex Regiment, the Cameronians, 102nd Anti-Tank Regiment, East Riding Yeomanry, Westminster Dragoons, Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, Hampshire Regiment, Worcestershire Regiment, Dorset Regiment, Somerset Light Infantry and Wiltshire Regiment.

In the early hours of the 24th, the biggest airborne operation of the war was carried out by the XVIII Airborne Corps (commander, Major-General Matthew B. Ridgeway) of the Allied 1st Airborne Army, and comprising the British 6th (Major-General E. Bols) and U.S. 17th Airborne Divisions. Over three thousand transport planes, operating from twenty-six British and Continental bases and with strong air cover, dropped parachutists north and north-east of Wesel within range of covering artillery. This time, it will be noted, the airborne landings took place after (not, as in the Normandy invasion—see Chapter 311—before) the first assaulting troops had secured a footing. A link between the two forces was rapidly established, the



#### SCENE OF THE RHINE CROSSINGS

This map shows the area of the Rhine crossings by 21st Army Group on the night of March 23-24, 1945 (see text in this page). Also shown is the ground covered by the operations of the British 6th and U.S. 17th Airborne Divisions, the most successful of their kind during the war.

6th Division having meantime seized intact six bridges over the Yssel. The morning saw the river filled with ferrying craft of all types, and bridging operations had started. It must have been a wonderful sight for spectators, among whom Mr. Churchill (see page 3514) and General Eisenhower characteristically were present, often in positions that alarmed their subordinates.

The first British bridge to span the Rhine was that constructed by the VIII Corps Engineers at Xanten. At zero hour (2 a.m.) the commanding officer had gone forward through Xanten, by then ablaze under enemy fire, to establish contact with the crossing control, and to fix the exact site for the start of the bridge and the places where the 167 vehicles carrying equipment should assemble. An hour before light, advanced parties had arrived and started work. The enemy was, however, still in possession of the opposite bank at this place, and the main columns of vehicles as they reached the parking places came under fire. It was not till 10.30 a.m., by which time the enemy parties on the east bank had been pinched out by assaulting troops, that work could proceed. The main difficulty to be overcome was the laying of adequate anchors in the strong current. Previous rehearsals on the Maas had shown that extra heavy anchors would be necessary, and that they would have to be laid from a ferry raft working on a cable. Getting the cable across was no easy task, and in the course of the day it was broken several times by derelict



#### GLIDERBORNE ARMY IN ACTION

Within 30 minutes of their landings east of the Rhine on March 24, 1945, the British 6th Airborne Division had captured its main objectives, taken many prisoners, and seized intact six bridges across the Yssel river. Before nightfall they had linked up with ground forces at points five miles east of the Rhine. Here an airborne anti-tank gun crew—men and weapons landed by glider—take up position at Hamminkeln, north-west of Wesel.

Photo. British Official





Guardsman CHARLTON  
(Irish Guards)



Cpl. CHAPMAN  
(Monmouthshire Regt.)



Cpl. TOPHAM  
(1st Canadian Parachute Bn.)

At Wistedt, Germany, on April 21, 1945, Guardsman Edward Colquhoun Charlton, co-driver of a tank which had been knocked out, alone, on his own initiative and armed only with a Browning, counter-attacked the enemy. He inflicted heavy casualties, halting them, and though twice wounded continued to fight till he fell. He was awarded the V.C. posthumously.

The V.C. was awarded to Corporal Edward Thomas Chapman for his 'magnificent bravery' on the Dortmund-Ems Canal on April 2, 1945. Single-handed, he repulsed fanatical enemy attacks, gave his battalion time to reorganize a vital position overlooking the only bridge across the canal and greatly aided the success of later operations.

Parachuting on to a strongly-defended area of the Rhine on March 24, 1945, Corporal Frederick George Topham, a medical orderly, was awarded the V.C. for 'sustained gallantry of the highest order.' For six hours, most of the time in great pain, he acted with outstanding bravery. 'His magnificent and selfless courage inspired all who witnessed it.'

*Photos, Canadian Official ; News Chronicle*

been made in accumulating the material required for the undertaking, and by the time the successful issue of the battle of the Rhineland had enabled final selection of the exact point of crossing, resulting from reconnaissance, to be made, everything was on the move towards advanced points of assembly.

It had been no easy task, for masses of heavy equipment had to be moved across country in which all avenues

Landing Craft  
Carried  
Overland

of communication had been damaged or, as in the case of canals, put completely out of action.

Under these conditions landing craft and other equipment for amphibious operations had to be carried 200 miles overland. As the Rhine crossing would require expert navigation, it fell to British and U.S. naval detachments to surmount the difficulties of these movements. To maintain secrecy, the naval personnel so engaged lived, worked and were dressed like soldiers. This operation was under the overall command of Admiral Sir Harold Burrough, Naval C-in-C., Allied Naval Expeditionary Force, the senior British and American officers being Captain P. G. H. James, R.N., and Commander William J. Whiteside, U.S.N. Forethought and meticulous planning coupled with an immense display of energy had, however, their reward, and ten days after the elimination of the Wesel pocket the final stages of preparation for the Rhine crossing had been reached.

Here is Montgomery's own brief description of the work of preparation,

given in his post-war lecture to the Royal United Services Institution already quoted: "The quicker we could engage the enemy in mobile warfare in the north German plains the sooner the end would come. While the battle of the Rhineland was proceeding the details for the crossing of the Rhine were being worked out. Many engineering and administrative preparations

had been initiated back in December before the Ardennes counter-offensive. In particular, work had started on roads and railways necessary to establish our lines of communication across the Meuse [Maas] and Rhine. We had furthermore stocked the 2nd Army depots with some 130,000 tons of stores for the coming operations. And so 21st Army Group launched the operation for crossing the Rhine a fortnight after completion of the battle of the Rhineland. Future history must give the armies great credit for this. It was a most remarkable achievement. The fortnight between the end of the battle of the Rhineland and the crossing of the Rhine was one of intense activity. Formations were regrouped and lined up in their correct positions, covered by a screen of troops holding the river bank. Dense and continuous clouds of smoke were employed to hide our intentions and final preparations."

It was this smoke screen that especially impressed observers, and its long continuance may well have affected the enemy's morale, keeping him on tenterhooks. An immense intensification of the attack by the Allied air forces on his roads, railways and sources of petrol supply at the same time interfered with the movement of his reserves to meet the coming blow.

At last, on the night of March 23-24 the assault across the Rhine was



#### BRITISH COMMANDO TROOPS FORCED THE RHINE

Spearheading the Rhine crossings under a barrage of 1,500 guns, British forces of the 1st Commando Brigade made a surprise crossing of the river in the evening of March 23, 1945, four hours ahead of any other troops. Before dawn next day they had captured the town of Wesel, their first objective. Here a detachment is on the look-out for enemy rearguards.





### MEETING ON THE LIPPE

Striking east along the northern bank of the River Lippe in the Ruhr—on whose southern bank the U.S. 9th Army was operating—the British 6th Guards Armoured Brigade on March 28, 1945, captured the important communications centre of Dorsten, and linked with the Americans next day. Above, a British tank man gives a light to an American at the meeting.

assault craft, out of control through enemy fire, drifting down stream. Nevertheless the work went on steadily, and by 11.30 p.m. the bridge 1,500 feet

long and its approach roads were open to traffic. By the end of the second day seven bridges in all were in operation to the bridge-head, which by then had been expanded to a width of 25 miles with a maximum depth of six miles.

The enemy's

resistance had initially been strongest on the northern flank, where he had concentrated three parachute divisions which, as always, fought stubbornly. The U.S. 9th Army met comparatively light opposition, the two assault divisions losing only 31 men killed. The comparative ease and speed with which the initial crossing was effected was no doubt due to the perfection of the preparations and to the tremendous weight of the covering fire provided. Naval detachments with the craft they had dragged by road right across Holland

### Light Losses of the Crossing



### IN RUINED MÜNSTER

Münster, capital of Westphalia, was captured on April 3, 1945, by the British 6th Guards Armoured Brigade in conjunction with elements of the U.S. 17th Airborne Division. Here, a British and U.S. patrol passes the ruined cathedral. Left, U.S. reconnaissance party confers with a British tank-crew over a map. The city had been heavily shelled after the German commandant's refusal to surrender.

*Photos, British Official ; British Newspaper Pool*

played an important part in the crossing. That the enemy was unable to launch counter-attacks on a considerable scale was due largely to the heavy air interdiction programme which had been carried out, and, no doubt, to the effects of the defeat that the enemy had suffered in the Rhineland.

The American bridge-head at Remagen, by now considerably extended, had also tended to cause dispersion of German reserves, particularly those in







### BRITISH DRIVE TOWARDS BREMEN

Troops of the British 1st Commando Brigade on April 5, 1945, cleared the German industrial and railroad centre of Osnabrück in their drive towards Bremen, taking many prisoners. Left, an armoured car of the British 11th Armoured Division, bearing a Nazi street name-plate on its bonnet, pushes towards Osnabrück. Right, British Commando troops search for snipers in the town's ruined streets.

*Photos, British Official*

the Ruhr which might have been used against the U.S. 9th Army. The Germans apparently expected the attack on the Ruhr to develop directly from the Remagen bridge-head and had concentrated for defence north of the Sieg river, only to be caught on the wrong foot when General Hodges broke out of his bridge-head to the south-east on a wider manoeuvre, which is described in Chapter 369.

of the 2nd Army, and the U.S. 9th Army, were able to advance rapidly.

On March 28 armour of the 21st Army Group reached the line Borken-Dorsten-Hamborn and, advancing across the Westphalian plain, by March 31 was approaching Münster, by which time the U.S. 1st Army by a very rapid swing northwards was in the area west of Cassel and Paderborn east of the Ruhr.

By April 3 the U.S. 9th Army had reached the Weser near Minden and, having linked up with the U.S. 1st Army near Paderborn, completed the encirclement of the Ruhr. From that date the 9th Army reverted to General Bradley's command. Its subsequent operations therefore form part of the American advance east of the Rhine, which is described in Chapter 369. The rest of this chapter follows exclusively the operations of the 21st Army Group up to the enemy's final surrender. The purpose of these operations, as Montgomery himself stated, was to cut progressively the German east-west lines

### AS GERMANY'S SURRENDER APPROACHED

This map shows the area of operations of the Northern Group of armies in north-west Germany as the war in the west collapsed with the unconditional surrender to Field-Marshal Montgomery at Lüneburg on May 4, 1945. The shaded portion, covering the operations of the Anglo-U.S. Airborne Divisions following the Rhine crossings, is reproduced on a larger scale in page 3659.

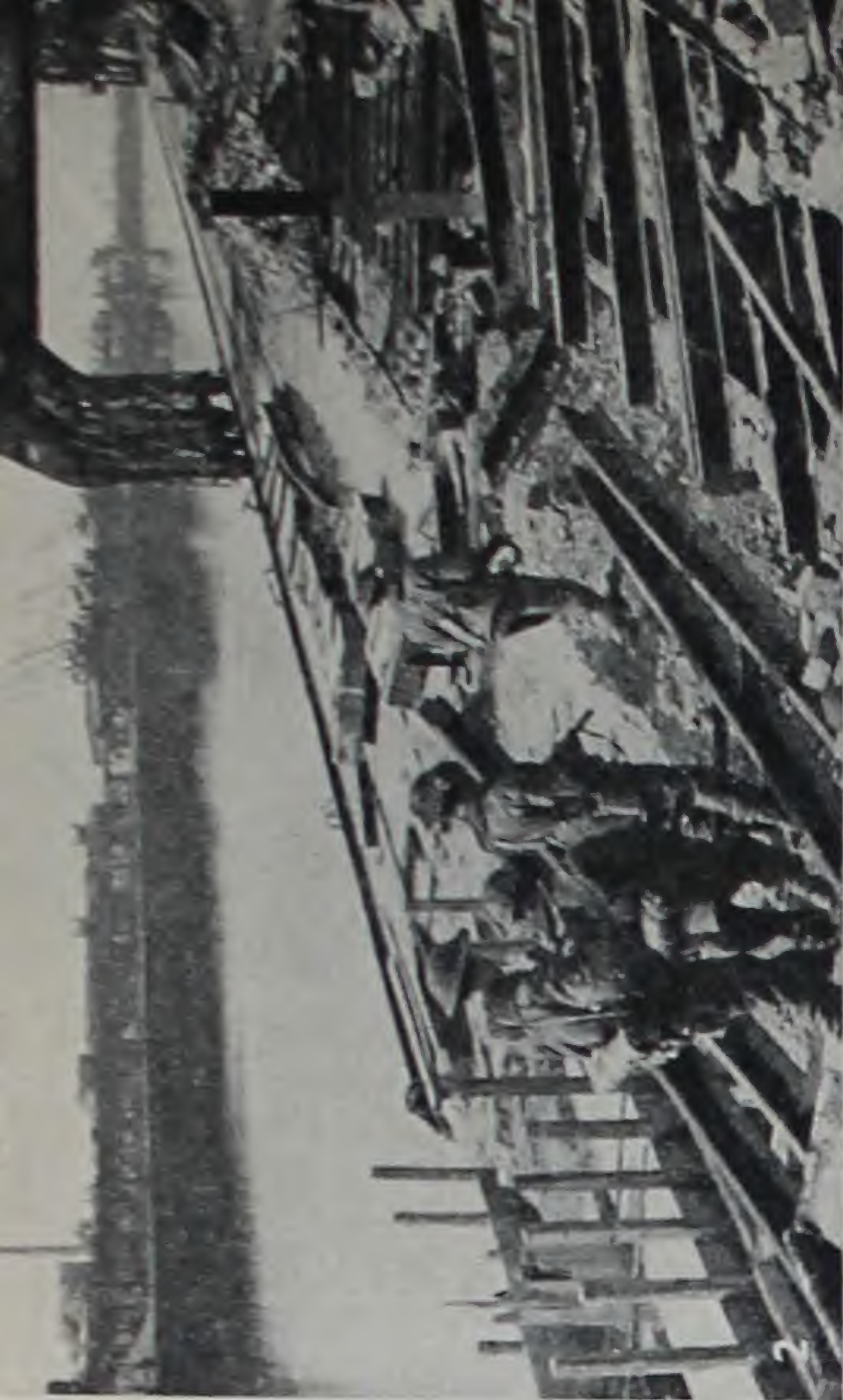


**Advance to the Elbe Begins**

ciently complete for the advance to the Elbe to begin. On March 29 it started at dawn, after some preliminary fighting to secure more elbow room. Each of the three armies had its separate mission. The U.S. 9th Army on the right was directed towards the front Magdeburg-Wittenberge, pressing into the north-west section of the Ruhr as it advanced. In the centre the British 2nd Army was to advance with its left flank directed on Hamburg, while on the left General Crerar's Canadian II Corps, passing through the 2nd Army bridge-head, was to swing north along the Rhine to out-flank Arnhem. There later his Canadian I Corps was to cross and establish a protective flank between the Rhine and the Zuider Zee, while the II Corps opened up routes leading northwards towards the coast.

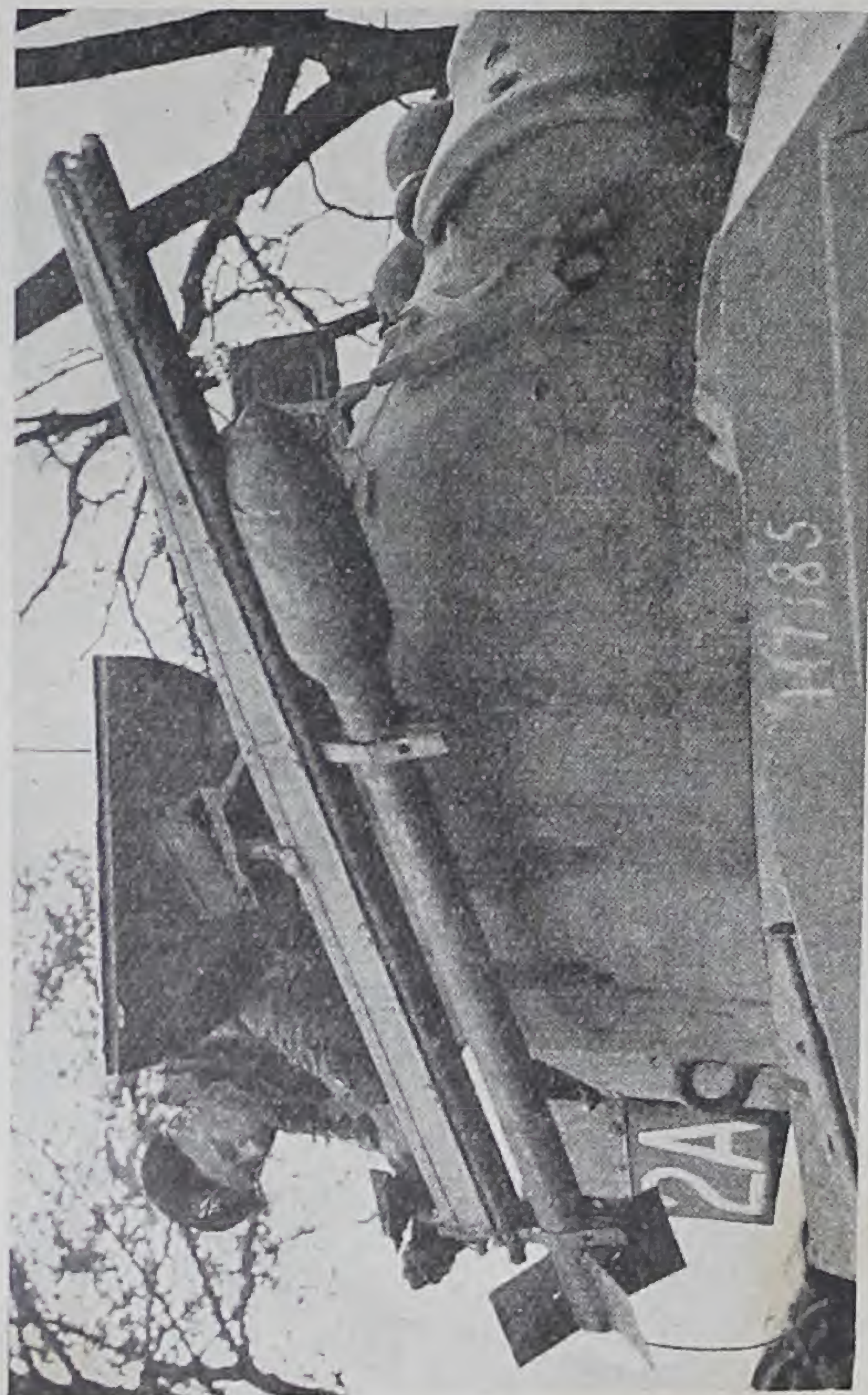
The enemy tried desperately to assemble forces to oppose the advance, especially on the Ems-Dortmund Canal which faced the centre and left of the 2nd Army. On this part of the front there was bitter fighting, but the right





### BRITISH TROOPS CAPTURED BREMEN

At midnight on April 23-24, 1945, the British 2nd Army opened the assault on Bremen, Germany's second largest port. On the morning of April 26 the ruined city surrendered. 1. British tanks parked near the city as refugees pass by. 2. British patrol mops up in the fanatically defended dock area where the Nazis held out till the last. 3. Clearing the devastated centre of the city during the last stages of fierce street-fighting.



### 'TULIPS' FOR BREMEN

During the advance from the Rhine in April 1945 a new British secret weapon was introduced. This was a Sherman tank which fired R.A.F. Typhoon rockets. It was conceived, evolved and tested in a single day as a result of co-operation between the Coldstream Guards and the R.A.F. Known as 'Tulip,' the new weapon, after a few modifications, was capable of demolishing a house at 600 yards. 'Tulips' played an important part in the storming of the Altenlingen Bridge over the River Ems. Here, outside Zeven (a mile S.W. of Bremen), a tank-man adjusts a 'Tulip' to the range required.

*Photos, British Official; Associated Press*





### SECOND BATTLE OF ARNHEM

The British 49th (West Riding) Division, fighting with the 1st Canadian Army, on the night of April 12-13, 1945, made a surprise crossing of the Yssel river east of Arnhem, which they entered the following day and finally cleared on April 14. Here 'Buffaloes' of the 79th Armoured Division wait at dawn to ferry men and equipment across the river. German prisoners huddle in the background.

*Photo, British Official*

of communications to the coast and to deliver a series of right hooks to round up the enemy, while the left flank formations drove up towards the coast to finish him off.

On April 6 the VIII Corps (commanded by Lieutenant-General H. Barker) of the 2nd Army, having cleared Osnabrück, reached and crossed the Weser near Minden, while a few days later the XII Corps (commanded by Lt.-Gen. Neil M. Ritchie) crossed the river farther north and then turned north for Hamburg.

Meanwhile on April 2 the 1st Canadian Army launched an attack to clear the enemy from the ten-mile-long "island"

**Advance in the Netherlands** between Arnhem and Nijmegen. They met stubborn resistance. Extending northwards,

by April 7 they were fighting with German troops holding the line of the Yssel round Zutphen (captured that day) and Deventer. That night two battalions of French parachute troops, consisting partly of regular soldiers and partly of members of the *Maquis*, were dropped east of the Zuider Zee, and on the 8th, ground troops, advancing from Zutphen, established contact with them. Heavy fighting continued on this front, resulting in the capture of Deventer on April 11, and the opening of a fresh attack north of Arnhem, finally cleared on April 14.

While this fighting was in progress, the Canadians had also been pressing

northwards on both sides of the Dutch-German frontier, and on April 15 reconnaissance elements reached the North Sea. The capture of Groningen the following day virtually completed the liberation of the northern Netherlands east of the Zuider Zee, and isolated the German Army in the western Netherlands.

At the same time the left and centre of the 2nd Army were closing in on Bremen and Hanover. On April 10 Hanover was captured and the XXX Corps (commanded by General Bryan Horrocks) began the investment of Bremen. On the 12th the Americans crossed the Elbe not far from Magdeburg. The 2nd Army continued to press on between Hanover and Bremen towards Hamburg, and to the west of Bremen were

approaching Oldenburg. Stiff resistance was encountered both at Bremen and Oldenburg, and north-east of Brunswick a German group even made a vigorous counter-attack on the American flank.

The opening of the Russian offensive on April 16 (see Chapter 362) of course made the German situation increasingly hopeless; but by that time the death agony of Germany was already far

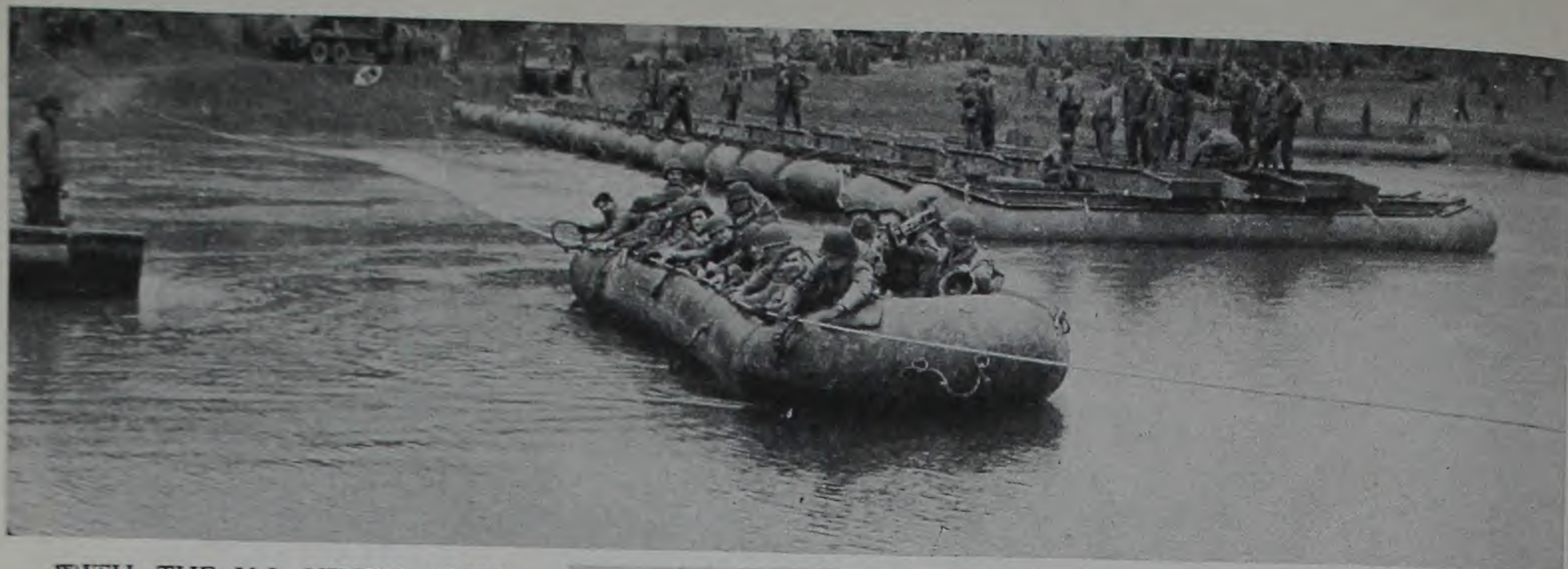
### CANADIANS CAPTURE ZUTPHEN

On April 7, 1945, infantry of the 1st Canadian Army, pushing north to the V-bomb launching sites, captured the ancient Netherlands town of Zutphen on the Yssel river—where Sir Philip Sidney died in 1586—after fierce fighting. Below, Canadian mechanized units cross a partly demolished bridge spanning the moat which surrounds Zutphen.

*Photo, Associated Press*







#### WITH THE U.S. NINTH ARMY

On March 28, 1945, the U.S. 9th Army, under General Simpson, captured the important river port of Duisburg, on the Rhine. Right, troops cross a Duisburg bridge seized intact. Above, U.S. 9th Army engineers build a pontoon bridge over the Weser in April, while infantry haul themselves across.

advanced in the west. The army isolated in the western Netherlands had lost all strategic meaning; even its defensive line on the Yssel had been penetrated, and the Canadians were advancing south of the Zuider Zee towards Amsterdam. Characteristically the German commander chose this moment for one of the most senseless acts of vindictive vandalism of which the German Army was guilty, when he ordered the flooding of the country (*see* Chapter 358). The force still holding out at Bremen was in no better position, and by April 18 the 2nd Army had reached Lüneburg and



#### SCOTTISH TROOPS NEAR THE ELBE

Swinging north from Celle towards the Elbe, the 15th (Scottish) Division on April 14, 1945, advanced 21 miles to reach Uelzen, an important rail junction on the Berlin-Bremen and Hamburg-Hanover lines. Here—only 25 miles from the Elbe and 45 miles from Hamburg—they met fanatical opposition from S.S. formations which held out for five days. Below, a Scottish patrol passes a Red Cross party in the burning town.

*Photo, British Official*



had begun to line up on the left bank of the Elbe, masking Hamburg. The Allies continued to establish themselves on the Elbe between Dessau and Hamburg, but did not cross in force.

The advance of the Allies into Germany had forced the enemy by this time to create new commands: Field-Marshal Busch (earlier commanding an Army Group on the Eastern Front) was appointed C.-in-C. in the north-west, covering Denmark, the Netherlands and the Hamburg-Emden area; Field-Marshal Albert Kesselring (transferred from Italy to replace Rundstedt after the failure of the Ardennes offensive) was put in charge of the "Southern Redoubt" (Bavaria, Austria, and Bohemia).

By April 24 British troops were pressing into the suburbs of Bremen, and on the following day Russian and U.S. troops linked up on the Elbe near Torgau. April 26 saw Bremen completely in British hands, except for the dock area, where fighting continued for a couple of days longer. The Canadians continued to close in on

**Bremen Falls  
to the  
British**





## GERMANS SURRENDER THEIR GREATEST PORT

Hamburg, Germany's second city, was surrendered on May 3, 1945, to the British 2nd Army by the garrison commander, General Wolz, who met the British commander near Harburg and rode into the city at the head of the British troops. Guided by a British naval officer prisoner-of-war, a German colonel and his staff had entered the British lines the previous day with a letter from Field-Marshal Busch, commanding the Hamburg area, requesting surrender negotiations. 1. Inside the British lines the German colonel (second from the right) makes final arrangements for the surrender talks. 2. British officers enter Hamburg Town Hall on May 3 to take over the city from General Wolz. 3. A Hamburg policeman watches a British corporal erect a street sign after the occupation. 4. A corner of Hamburg's badly blitzed dockyard areas.

*Photos, British Official; Associated Press*



Oldenburg and the British on Hamburg, but not till April 29 was any sensational enterprise undertaken. On that day, having forced a crossing of the Elbe at Lauenburg, south-east of Hamburg, in driving rain, mobile formations of the 2nd Army, reinforced by the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division, were launched in a drive towards Lübeck, in order to frustrate any attempt the Germans retreating before Rokossovsky (see Chapter 362) might make to withdraw into Schleswig-Holstein. Lübeck and Wismar were entered on May 2 and contact was made with the Russians.

By the same date a U.S. airborne corps of two divisions, together with the British 6th Airborne Division, had taken up a position facing east on the line Darchau-Schwerin-Wismar, to hold up the retreating Germans. This was a notable and rapidly carried out manoeuvre which, although it met with almost no resistance, was needed to convince the Germans of the impossibility of continuing the struggle in Denmark and Norway—if, indeed, they had had any thought of doing so after hearing of Hitler's death on May 1. While plans for outflanking Hamburg on the Bremen

model were actually under way, the commander of the garrison started negotiations on May 2 for the surrender of the city, carried out next day.

On May 3 also, Admiral Doenitz, as Hitler's successor, sent envoys to Field-Marshal Montgomery's headquarters at Lüneburg Heath in a vain attempt to obtain separate armistice terms from him. By this time the country east of the Elbe

**Doenitz  
Seeks  
Armistice**

was packed with German troops and refugees fleeing before the Russians—the former anxious to come into our lines to surrender and sadly disappointed when told that if they wanted to surrender they must apply to the Russians. The Emden and Cuxhaven promontories were now virtually the only areas where fighting still continued, but May 3 saw the surrender of Oldenburg to the Canadians, and Kiel and Flensburg were declared open towns; the R.A.F. in the five preceding days having put out of action 150 ships, including a number of U-boats attempting to escape to Norway.

On May 4 a fresh delegation from Admiral Doenitz arrived at Field-Marshal Montgomery's headquarters, and this time they were without difficulty convinced that nothing short of unconditional surrender would be accepted. Doenitz having heard their report bowed to the inevitable, and on the same evening General-Admiral Hans Georg von Friedeburg as his representative signed the instrument of unconditional surrender for all German armed forces in north-west Germany, Holland and Denmark, including the garrisons of Heligoland and the Frisian Islands—two days after the cessation of hostilities in Italy (see Chapter 361). The armies of the British Commonwealth of Nations had completed their share of the Allied task.

Field-Marshal Montgomery's own account of the surrender was given in characteristic style to war correspondents an hour before the signing of the capitulation. "There is a German general called Blumentritt who, as far as I know, commands all forces between the Baltic and the Weser river," he began. "On Wednesday he sent in and said he wanted to come in on Thursday and surrender what they call the army group Blumentritt. . . . He was told, 'You can come in. That's O.K. We are delighted.' . . .

**Montgomery's  
Story of the  
Surrender**

"Now the next thing that happened was yesterday morning (Thursday). Blumentritt said, 'As far as I know there is something going on just above my level and therefore I am not coming



#### BRITISH TROOPS FORCE THE ELBE

In the early morning of April 29, 1945, the British 1st Commando Brigade and the 15th (Scottish) Division crossed the 300-yards wide lower Elbe in assault-boats and Buffaloes manned by the 79th Armoured Division at Lauenburg, to the south-east of Hamburg, which later in the day they captured. Above, Sherman D.D. swimming tanks after the crossing. Below, Scottish troops land from assault-craft at the double

*Photos, British Official*







### ARNHEM MEN RELEASED BY THE 'DESERT RATS'

Breaking out from the Rethem bridge-head across the Aller on April 16, 1945, the British 7th Armoured Division captured Stalag XI B near Fallingbommel. Here they released 6,500 British and U.S. prisoners, including 700 men from Arnheim. Several hundred were found in hospital suffering from malnutrition as a result of forced marches from East Prussian camps. Here, prisoners greet their liberators.

*Photo, British Newspaper Pool*

in.' He did not come in. But instead there arrived here to see me four German people—General-Admiral Friedeburg, who is commander-in-chief of the German navy; General Kinzel, chief of staff to Field-Marshal Busch; Rear-Admiral Wagner, staff officer to Friedeburg, and Major Friede, who is staff officer to Kinzel. So the party really was just two chaps—Friedeburg and Kinzel.

"Now this is extremely interesting. They lined up above my caravan and I said, 'What do you want?' They said, 'We've come here from Field-Marshal Busch to ask you to accept the surrender of the three German armies that are now withdrawing in front of the Russians in Mecklenburg between Rostock and Berlin. . . . We are very anxious about the condition of the civilians who are driven along as these armies flee from the advancing Russians, and we want you to accept their surrender.'

#### Offer to Surrender Three Armies

"I said, 'No, certainly not. These armies are fighting the Russians and therefore if they surrender to anybody it must be to the Russians. It has

nothing to do with me . . . ' I then said to them, 'Are you prepared to surrender to me the German forces on my western and northern flanks . . . ?'

"They said, 'No.' So far it had been a very good discussion. Then they said, 'We are most anxious about the condition of civilians in the areas of Lübeck and on the northern flank. . . . We thought perhaps you would make some plan with us whereby you would advance slowly and we would withdraw slowly and all the civilians would be all right.' So far we had not got very far.

"I said, 'No. There is nothing doing. . . . I wonder whether you officers know what is the battle situation on the Western Front? In case you don't, I will show it to you.' I produced a map which showed the battle situation. . . . I said to them, 'You must clearly understand three points: One, you must surrender to me unconditionally all the German forces in Holland, in Friesland, including the Frisian Islands, Heligoland, and all other islands, in Schleswig-

Holstein and in Denmark. Two, once you have done that I am then prepared to discuss with you the implications of the surrender. . . . Three, if you don't agree to Point Number One, I shall go on with the war and will be delighted to do so and am ready. . . .'

"They then said to me, 'We came here entirely for the purpose of asking you to accept surrender of these German armies on your eastern flank. . . . We have no power to agree to what you now want. . . . But two of us will now go back to where we came from, get agreement and come back again. Two will stay here with you.' So yesterday afternoon between 3.30 and 4 o'clock the General-Admiral, accompanied by Major Friede, went back. . . . He was to come back here with the doings. . . . Now they have arrived—they are up top somewhere and my present intention is that they will sign what I have prepared. This piece of paper is really the

#### Germans Seek Fresh Authority



Instrument of Surrender of the forces in accordance with my demands. I am dealing with the commander of the forces facing me and that is why I am doing it alone like this. . . . I have absolutely excluded anything which would be an Allied thing and would require the presence of our Allied Russians and Americans and so on. The forces which surrender will total over 1,000,000—that is their own statement. It will involve some very tricky problems getting them from these places—from West Holland and Denmark. . . . The next scene will be up top in the tent."

It may seem that in all the operations following the opening of the western front the forces of the British Empire played a secondary part, and it is of course true that the Empire was unable to equal the weight of the American



#### GERMANS IN HOLLAND LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS

In a small hotel at Wageningen, near Arnhem, on May 6, 1945, General Blaskowitz, commanding the German 21st Army of about 120,000 men, surrendered all the German forces in the Netherlands to Lieutenant-General Charles Foulkes, G.O.C., Canadian I Corps. Here General Foulkes reads the surrender orders to General Blaskowitz (right, centre) on whose left is Lieutenant-General Reichelt, his Chief of Staff. Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands was present.



effort. None the less the success of the whole campaign depended largely on the achievement of the Imperial forces. Apart from the heavy losses they had inflicted on the enemy, without the liberation by them of the Channel and North Sea ports, notably Antwerp, the whole western

offensive would certainly have been greatly delayed and might possibly have been brought to a complete standstill. Further developments of secret weapons might also have had serious effects on the Allied bases on both sides of the Channel. The strategic role of the 21st Army Group was therefore of exceptional importance.

In the final phase of the campaign this group carried out the only deliberately planned crossing of the Rhine, and that in the area where it must certainly have been expected by the enemy. That it met with such complete success was due to meticulous preparation and admirable execution. The crossing was planned and carried out on so great a scale that it was possible to deploy the full strength of the army on the farther bank with remarkable speed. The enemy was given no time to recover, and although in places he fought stubbornly for a short time, he was never able to offer organized resistance. The end consequently came in a general widespread collapse of morale and physical inability to continue the struggle, and not in decisive battle. If one single operation can be said to have delivered the death-blow to Nazi Germany, it was the 21st Army Group's forcing of the Rhine. That it was accomplished with such apparent ease and with so little loss of life should not obscure the importance of the achievement.

#### Triumph of Meticulous Planning

#### WEST MEETS EAST

On May 7, 1945, Field-Marshal Montgomery met Marshal Rokossovsky, of the 2nd White Russian Army, at Wismar, scene of the link-up between British and Soviet forces four days earlier. Troops of the British 6th Airborne Division formed a guard of honour for the two great military leaders. Here Field-Marshal Montgomery extends a hand of greeting as he and the Red Army marshal meet.

Photo, British Official



# Instrument of Surrender

of

all German armed forces in HOLLAND, in  
northwest Germany including all islands,  
and in LÜNEBURG.

1. The German Command agrees to the surrender of all German armed forces in HOLLAND, in northwest Germany including the FRISIAN ISLANDS and LÜNEBURG and all other islands, in SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, and in DENMARK, to the C.-in-C. of the Army Group. This to include all naval ships in these areas. These forces to lay down their arms and to surrender unconditionally.
2. All hostilities on land, on sea, or in the air by German forces in the above areas to cease at 0800 hrs. British Double Summer Time on Saturday 5 May 1945.
3. The German command to carry out as on 2, and without argument or delay, all further orders that will be issued by the Allied Powers on any subject.
4. Disobedience of orders, or failure to comply with them, will be regarded as a breach of these surrender terms and will be dealt with by the Allied Powers in accordance with the accepted laws and usages of war.
5. This instrument of surrender is independent of, without prejudice to, and will be superseded by any further instrument of surrender imposed by or on behalf of the Allied Powers and applicable to Germany and the German armed forces as a whole.
6. This instrument of surrender is written in English and in German. The English version is the authentic text.
7. The decision of the Allied Powers will be final if any doubt or dispute arises as to the meaning or interpretation of the surrender terms.

B. L. Montgomery  
Field-Marshal

4 <sup>PM</sup> May 1945  
1830 hrs

*1. Friedeburg*  
*Witzel*  
*L. Montgomery*  
*Sturm*  
*Heubach*



## UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER SIGNED AT LÜNEBURG

General-Admiral von Friedeburg, C-in-C., the German Navy, signs the instrument of unconditional surrender on May 4, 1945, at 21st Army Group H.Q. at Lüneburg Heath (see also page 3671). Friedeburg heads the enemy signatures on the document, reproduced on the left, about which Field-Marshal Montgomery, seated on the German's left, had second thoughts : to Clause I he added in his own hand the words, 'This to include all naval ships in these areas.' He also altered the time of the 'Cease Fire,' corrected the date and initialled it. Seven months later, British troops were putting the finishing touches to a memorial marking the site of the historic ceremony (below). The wording runs : 'Here on 4th May, 1945, a Delegation from the German High Command surrendered unconditionally to Field-Marshal Montgomery all Land, Sea and Air Forces in North-West Germany, Denmark and Holland.'





**April 1.** U.S. 1st and 9th Armies linked up at Lippstadt, cutting off the Ruhr. 1st Ukrainian Army captured Glogau (Silesia); other Red Army forces took Sopron (Hungary). U.S. 10th Army landed in great strength on Okinawa (Ryukyu Islands).

**April 2.** Announced that Guards Armoured Division had entered Münster, British 6th Airborne Division had crossed the Ems Canal and that British 2nd Army was over 100 miles beyond the Rhine; R.A.F. bombed Berlin again. 3rd Ukrainian Army captured Nagy Kanisza, Hungarian oil-centre. 8th Army made amphibious landing N. of Ravenna. U.S.A. 15th A.F. heavily attacked communications in Austria and N. Italy. Saipan-based Super-Fortresses bombed Tokyo.

**April 3.** Canadians established bridge-head on Zutphen-Hengelo Canal. 3rd Ukrainian Army captured Wiener Neustadt, Eisenstadt, Neukirchen, and Gloggnitz, on approaches to Vienna.

**April 4.** British 11th Airborne Division by-passed Osnabrück, crossed the Weser; Kassel surrendered to Americans; U.S. 3rd Army occupied Fulda and Gotha. French 1st Army captured Karlsruhe. By night R.A.F. heavily bombed Harburg oil plants. 2nd Ukrainian Army stormed Bratislava; other Red Army forces took Baden. M.A.A.F. intensively attacked communications in N. Italy.

**April 5.** British 1st Commando Brigade cleared Osnabrück; Canadians took Almelo, occupied Zutphen; U.S. 3rd Army captured Mulhausen. Heavy U.S.A.A.F. attacks on Bavaria. Russia denounced Russo-Japanese neutrality pact of 1941.

**April 6.** Canadian and British troops linked up near Zutphen; British troops crossed the Weser near Minden; U.S. 9th Army finally cleared Hamm; U.S. 3rd Army captured Eisenach and Meiningen; U.S. 7th Army cleared Würzburg; French reached Neckar River S. of Heilbronn. Berlin raided for first time by Continent-based R.A.F. Mosquitoes.

**April 6-7.** U.S. aircraft struck Japanese naval force off Okinawa, sinking the "Yamato," Japan's largest battleship, two cruisers, three destroyers, and shooting down 417 aircraft. British carrier force attacked the Sakishima group.

**April 7.** Canadians captured Zutphen; 1,300 Fortresses and Liberators attacked German airfields, depots and rail targets, shooting down 104 enemy fighters. Heavy fighting inside Vienna. Defeat announced of Japanese 15th Army in Burma. Tokyo and Nagoya heavily bombed by Super-Fortresses.

**April 7-8 (night).** French parachute troops dropped over wide area E. of Zuider Zee to link up with Canadians.

**April 8.** U.S. 1st Army cleared Göttingen; French Army captured Pforzheim, N.W. of Stuttgart. Russians forced Danube N.W. and W. of Bratislava. New Greek Government formed with Admiral Voulgaris as Premier.

**April 9.** Heavy R.A.F. raids on Hamburg, Kiel. 3rd White Russian Army captured Königsberg. In Italy 8th Army launched powerful attack across Senio.

**April 10.** U.S. 9th Army captured Essen and Hanover; in over 5,600 sorties by R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F., 406 enemy planes shot down; Berlin airfields destroyed. In Italy U.S. troops took Massa. 14th Army captured Thazi, E. of Meiktila (Burma).

**April 11.** U.S. 9th Army captured Gelsenkirchen in Ruhr pocket; by night R.A.F. raided Berlin three times. Russians established Danube bridge-head in Vienna. 8th Army reached Santerno River (Italy). Russo-Yugoslav treaty signed.

**April 12.** U.S. 9th Army crossed Elbe; U.S. 80th Division captured Weimar and Erfurt; Buchenwald overrun; British 2nd Army took rail junction of Celle on Aller River; French 1st Army took Rastatt and Baden-Baden. Franklin Delano Roosevelt died; Mr. Harry S. Truman sworn in as President.

**April 13.** British troops of 1st Canadian Army crossed the Yssel near Arnhem; U.S. 9th Army occupied Dortmund; U.S. 3rd Army captured Jena. Red Armies completed capture of Vienna. Kyaupadaung (Burma) taken. U.S. forces landed on Bohol (Philippines).

**April 13-14.** Heavy attack by Super-Fortresses on Tokyo.

**April 14.** British finally cleared Arnhem; U.S. 3rd Army cleared Zeitz; U.S.A. 8th A.F. attacked Gironde estuary positions. Marshal Tolbukhin's troops forced River Traisen, captured Herzogenburg. 14th Army entered Hlaingdet, E. of Thazi. Announced that Australians had almost completed clearing up areas inland from New Guinea coast. Eastern Air Command bombers destroyed Thai power station (Siam).

**April 15.** All German land exits from W. Holland sealed; U.S. 9th Army cleared Stendal, on the Elbe; U.S. 1st and 9th Armies linked up on Ruhr River N. of Hagen. Russians took St. Pölten (Austria).

**April 16.** Germans at Groningen surrendered to Canadians; U.S. 1st and 9th Armies linked up to form new pocket in Harz Mountains; in Ruhr pocket enemy resistance ceased almost completely. R.A.F. bombed Swinemünde, sank the "Lutzow." Record total of 1,016 enemy planes destroyed by Allied air forces. Poles crossed Oder and Neisse Rivers. Taungup, last enemy coastal base in Arakan, taken.

**April 17.** U.S. 9th Army broke into Magdeburg; other U.S. forces took Plauen (Saxony). 2nd Ukrainian Army captured Zistersdorf, oil centre near Vienna. R.A.F. bombed Gestapo H.Q. at Odense (Denmark). Resistance to Australians ceased in But-Dagua area of New Guinea.

**April 18.** Germans opened sluice-gates and blew up dykes on Zuider Zee; Magdeburg fell to U.S. 9th Army; 3rd U.S. Army cleared Zwickau (Saxony); U.S. 1st Army entered Düsseldorf; R.A.F. in strength attacked Heligoland and island of Düne. 8th Army captured Argenta (Italy).

**April 19.** U.S. 1st Army captured Leipzig; Heligoland again bombed by R.A.F. 14th Army forces captured Chauk, Burmese oil-centre.

**April 20.** Battle of Ruhr ended;

German Army Group "B" eliminated; capture of Nuremberg by U.S. 7th Army. Red Army took Bad Freienwalde, N.E. of Berlin. Tito's troops seized Bakar, port near Fiume. In Burma 14th Army captured Pyawbwe, Yamethin, and Seikpyu.

**April 21.** U.S. 9th Army captured Salzgitter (Brunswick). U.S. 7th Army established bridge-head on S. bank of Danube. French took Freiburg; Berlin under fire from Soviet artillery. In Italy 15th Army Group liberated Bologna. Australians' capture of Karawop (New Guinea) announced. Russia signed treaty with Lublin Provisional Government.

**April 22.** U.S. 1st Army cleared Bitterfeld, captured Dessau; German pocket in Harz Mountains eliminated; French 1st Army took Stuttgart. Russians occupied Opava (Czechoslovakia). 8th Army troops captured Comacchio (Italy). Japanese resistance on Cebu Island (Philippines) wiped out.

**April 23.** French took Mulheim (Baden). Red Army captured Frankfurt-on-Oder, Oranienburg, Kottbus. 5th and 8th Armies reached River Po at several points. In Burma, Pyinmana fell to 14th Army forces.

**April 24.** U.S. 1st Army reached Elbe, N.E. of Dessau; other U.S. forces (with French) captured Ulm, on the Danube; 1st White Russian and 1st Ukrainian Armies linked up 11 miles S.E. of Berlin. 5th Army seized Spezia naval base; 8th Army took Ferrara.

**April 25.** Allied forces from E. and W. met at Torgau on the Elbe; Hitler's Berchtesgaden home bombed by R.A.F. U.S.A. 8th A.F. attacked Skoda works at Pilsen; by night Coastal Command bombed enemy shipping from Hook of Holland to Heligoland Bight. Announced that whole of Burma oilfields region had been cleared. San Francisco Conference opened.

**April 26.** Bremen surrendered to British; French 1st Army captured Constance. 2nd White Russian Army took Stettin; 2nd Ukrainian Army seized Brno (Czechoslovakia). Verona fell to U.S. troops of 5th Army. Toungoo (Burma) captured. Australians captured Maprik, New Guinea.

**April 27.** U.S. 3rd Army took Regensburg. 1st White Russian Army captured Potsdam, Rathenow and Spandau, all suburbs of Berlin; other Red Army forces seized Wittenberg. Last Germans expelled from Finland. Allied armies entered Genoa, freed Piacenza.

**April 28.** Augsburg fell to U.S. 7th Army; heavy fighting in centre of Berlin. Enemy forces in N. Italy in complete disintegration; Mussolini executed by partisans at Dongo (Lake Como).

**April 29.** Allied food-relief by air for Holland began; British crossed Elbe-Trave Canal; U.S. 9th Army linked up with Russians near Dessau. Germans in Italy surrendered unconditionally; British entered Venice.

**April 30.** U.S. 7th Army occupied Munich, overran Dachau. Tito's troops in Trieste. 14th Army took Pegu (Burma). Australians landed on Sadoe Island, off Borneo. Hitler appointed Admiral Doenitz his successor.





*Photo, British Official*

#### FOUR GERMANS CAME TO SEE FIELD-MARSHAL MONTGOMERY

'There arrived to see me four German people,' was Field-Marshal Montgomery's simple description (see page 3666) of how the enemy emissaries, including General-Admiral von Friedeburg, C.-in.-C., the German Navy (with his back to the flagstaff), came to try to arrange an armistice at Lüneburg Heath on May 3, 1945 (see also illus. in page 3674). When Montgomery showed Von Friedeburg his operational map, 'and he realized, apparently for the first time,' said the Field-Marshal later, 'the plight of the German armies on the various operational fronts, he broke down and wept.'







### BRITISH AND RUSSIANS MEET ON THE BALTIC

It was near the Baltic port of Wismar, which the British 6th Airborne Division entered on May 2, 1945, after a 50-miles advance from the Lauenburg bridge-head, that troops of the British 2nd Army and the 2nd White Russian Army (under Marshal Rokossovsky) first made contact. On the day of the link-up—May 3—the whole enemy defence system in north-west Germany collapsed, with wholesale surrenders of the panic-stricken Wehrmacht. Everywhere the roads were choked with German troops and civilians fleeing from the 2nd White Russian Army. Here Soviet tank-crews are being greeted by British troops.







*Photo, British Official*

#### GERMANS SEEK SURRENDER TERMS ON LÜNEBURG HEATH

At 21st Army Group H.Q. on Lüneburg Heath, near Hamburg, on May 4, 1945, were surrendered to Field-Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery all German forces in northern Germany, totalling 1,000,000 men. The German emissaries arrived seeking terms on May 3. They were General-Admiral Hans Georg von Friedeburg, who two days before succeeded Admiral Doenitz as C.-in-C., German Navy; General Kinzel, chief of staff to Field-Marshal Busch; Rear-Admiral Wagner, Friedeburg's chief of staff; and Major Friede, of Kinzel's staff, who are here conferring near the British H.Q.



# THE NETHERLANDS ON HER FEET AGAIN

*This chapter, telling of the final terrible months of occupation in the northern Netherlands, and of the coming of complete liberation at last with the surrender of Germany, is by Professor Pieter Sjoerds Gerbrandy, Premier of the exiled Dutch Government from September 1940 until the return to Holland, and is in itself a historic document. In spite of their sufferings, the Netherlands people were making good headway against their difficulties by the end of 1945*

**T**HE way in which the liberation of the Netherlands from the German yoke was brought about differed very much from what every Dutchman had anticipated. The fact that the country was liberated in two time-separated campaigns had the most terrible consequences for Dutchmen and their country. It was responsible for the misery and starvation in the north-western part during the first half of 1945, the only parallel of which, in the history of the Netherlands, was in the years 1573 until 1575 of the Spanish war.

By the end of 1944 the greater part of the southern Netherlands had been freed (see Chapter 332). But conditions in the still occupied northern part had become exceedingly bad. In the big cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague, and the smaller towns like Haarlem, Leyden, Delft and many others, there was no fuel, hardly any electricity and no gas; food had become very scarce, the calories per day falling as low as 450.

The railway strike, involving approximately 30,000 employees, which started on September 17, 1944 (see page 3207), continued until the German surrender, notwithstanding the terrible punishment inflicted by the Germans upon the families of these railway men, and the fact that the Germans made this yet another excuse for cutting off supplies from the population.

By the end of April 1945 all stores of food had been exhausted; but worse than all was the reign of terror exercised by the Germans. When I came back to my country and talked with my family and other people about the first four months of 1945, they mentioned the horrors of famine and cold; but when they talked of the situation as a whole, without exception they always laid emphasis on the terror exercised by the Germans, especially against the male population between the ages of 16 and 45. In nearly every house there was the feeling of constant apprehension because at any moment the Gestapo might knock at the door in order to deport some member of the family.

The Germans used the appalling conditions of the civilians to lure them to the east where they might work for the German war machine. Mobile kitchens moved through the streets of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague giving out the smell of well-cooked dishes, promised to everybody who would give himself up for slave work in the east. When this method failed, the occupying enemy suddenly, successively, in Rotterdam, The Hague and other cities, ordered families to stand before the doors of their houses; the young members of the population were picked up and sent far away to working and concentration camps. When these "press-gang" methods started they succeeded, for example in Rotterdam, because people were not immediately aware of the danger. Once, however, they had learned what was at stake, they refused to obey the order, and kept away from all the danger spots, or went into hiding in the country. From London the Government, through Radio Orange, gave all the moral support it could to the gallant people who, not-

withstanding famine and deadly threats refused to bow down under the German yoke.

In talking to the Dutch people about that time of terror and privation, I found that they assured me that, in the depths of their hearts, there remained always the firm hope of speedy deliverance. This hope was strengthened by the fact that the

**Food  
Relief  
Arrives**

Dutch and British Governments, together with the American, were able to arrange some measure of relief, through the mediation of the Swiss and especially the Swedish Governments. The attempt to send this relief started in October 1944, but it was months before an arrangement, with the agreement of the Germans, took effect, and only relatively small quantities of food came into the country. The mere appearance, however, of Swedish bread was for the starving people a new token of final victory. One cannot, of course, speak of relief without mentioning the unforgettable achievement of the British and American planes in

## R.A.F. FLIES FOOD TO STARVING HOLLAND

The cutting-off of the Netherlands by the Allies forced the Germans at last to allow food to be flown in to relieve starvation. On April 29, 1945, R.A.F. Lancasters dropped over 600 tons, including meat, vegetables, flour, tea and salt. For about a fortnight, these 'food drops' by the R.A.F. and the U.S.A.A.F. continued. Here, food enough to feed 3,280 people for one day is being loaded into the bomb-bay of a Lancaster.

*Photo, Keystone*







### IN HOLLAND AFTER THE LIBERATION

In a Red Cross clinic in Amsterdam, victims of German starvation able to walk are classified for medical treatment to restore them to health. Right, a Dutch mother and her children rescued from the Belsen horror-camp try on new clothes supplied by the British Red Cross. Below, Netherlanders greet Canadian troops who had brought food-supplies by road to the ruined city of Rotterdam.

*Photos, British Official; Planet News*



dropping great quantities of food a few days before the surrender of the Germans (see page 3552), when food supplies in Holland were completely exhausted. Everyone who witnessed the appearance of the planes and the descent of the supplies was overwhelmed with emotion. One of the reasons which made it

possible for the people of the Netherlands to hold out under conditions no longer human was the fact that there was a strong and, during the last three years, well organized resistance movement, which had good communications with the Netherlands Government in London. The existence of this resis-

tance movement made itself known in every part of the occupied country through acts of sabotage, and the burning down of the central registries. In some places the resisters guarded ports and installations which had to be kept in order for the day of liberation; elsewhere they did just the contrary, blowing up dumps and installations used by the enemy. The loss of life amongst this resistance movement was very great, because it was difficult in so densely populated a country to keep the secret communications really secret. One of the surviving leaders estimated the loss of life to have been at least 17,000.

Apart from the resistance movement proper, there were other agencies which kept the spirit of the people alive, amongst them the action taken by the medical profession, which was remarkable. With few exceptions all the medical men took the same line and never gave in to any German threat, even during the most dangerous months. For example, in the second half of January 1945 they sent a flaming protest to the German authorities against the cruelty of the deportations. After having drawn attention to the steady increase in disease, they went on as follows: "More cruel than all this is the ever growing and increasingly gruesome practice of deportation, and forcing of the Dutch male population to work in the German war machine. This compulsion is, in itself, a crime against the first rules of humanity and international law, but the cruelty with which these measures are being carried out represents nothing less than a picture of sadistic vengeance against defenceless men. The men,

Stand  
Made by  
Doctors



including cases of obvious disease and ill-health, are hunted out and thrown into camps. Hounded along the roads until exhausted, herded together nearly dead in barracks, trucks, and holds of ships; completely without food, medical attention or the barest necessities of life, these unhappy people are the prey of disease and misery. We can confirm these accusations with the evidence of eye-witnesses." Then follow some examples of the death-transport from Rotterdam, witnessed during the short halt in Zwolle and Haarlem, where attempts by onlookers to succour the victims were deliberately prevented by the Germans. The description affords a picture that defies all imagination.

Another phenomenon during the first months of 1945, never to be forgotten by the Dutch people, was the endless stream of half-starved men, women and children leaving their families in the cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague in order to try to find food, first in the surrounding country, and later tramping anything up to a hundred miles to the east and to the north. Many of these died on the way, some succeeded in bringing relief to their loved ones, and others, even at the last moment, were robbed by the Germans of their booty collected under the greatest dangers and hardships by long marches in the bitter winter cold, with little or no footgear.

It is the more surprising that the Dutch population held firm because, at



#### NAZIS' LOOT IN HOLLAND RECOVERED

Among the personal baggage of the Wehrmacht trapped in the Netherlands was much portable booty with which they had hoped to escape to the Reich. After the surrender in May 1945, British and Canadian troops disarming them at Den Helder found among their baggage, as shown above, typewriters, clocks, cameras, beer-mugs and bottles of wine. These goods were returned to their owners when these could be traced.

*Photo, Planet News*

the same time, the Germans had begun the destruction of the country. The greater part of the port of Amsterdam had been demolished. The port of Rotterdam had been severely damaged, and

another part of the town had been mined. Immense areas of the soil had been deliberately inundated, half by sea water. At the same time, large areas became flooded owing to the stoppage of pumps through lack of electricity. Intentional inundation covered over ten per cent of the arable land, including the island of Walcheren where the Allied forces had to break the dyke (see

#### VICTORY PARADE EPISODE AT UTRECHT

Armoured cars of the British 49th (West Riding) Division entered Utrecht on May 7, 1945. Below, as the troops passed by in a victory parade through the streets of the virtually undamaged city, shots were fired by concealed Nazi sympathizers. After a sharp skirmish, Dutch patriots captured the Nazis and the celebrations were resumed.

*Photo, Planet News*





Chap. 332). The flooded areas were among the most fertile in the Netherlands.

Although, once the Germans had been ejected, the soil thus lost could be reclaimed far more quickly than twenty years earlier, nevertheless in the most

**Gigantic Task of Restoration** seriously affected part it was bound to take many years to get the land back into good

condition. Even as late as the last days of April 1945, the Germans intentionally flooded the Wieringermeer, a polder reclaimed from the Zuider Zee twelve years before the outbreak of the war, and already covered with beautiful farms and villages. In some parts the soil is twenty feet below sea-level, so that even the farmhouses were completely covered with water. Fortunately the percentage of salt in the water of the former Zuider Zee was low; nevertheless all the houses had to be rebuilt. By August 1945 the dyke of this polder had been restored, and the rebuilding of the farmhouses and villages started before the end of 1945, but only years of effort would restore conditions to what they were before the inundations.

Destruction of the soil went hand in hand with plunder of the factories. I saw many factories where nothing was left except bare walls; not only the machinery had been taken away, but in many places the entire equipment, complete with foundations. In consequence of this, one of the difficulties the new

Dutch Government had to face was the fact that those industrialists who had refused to collaborate with the Germans could not start production because they had no tools and no machines. On the other hand, the factories (fortunately the smaller proportion) whose owners had collaborated, could offer new production which the country and the Government so urgently needed. In general the solution was found by removing the collaborators; but this solution had the disadvantage that other experts were not always available.

When I reflect upon my poor country and see the results of the four horrible months of 1945 before the liberation, a depressing picture confronts me. More than 200,000 of the deported population never returned, amongst them 105,000 Jewish Dutchmen; 25,000 died from hunger, apart from the innumerable men and women who would have recovered from their illnesses if they had had sufficient food.

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On April 14, 1945, troops of the British 49th (West Riding) Division, fighting under Canadian command, finally cleared the town of Arnhem, scene, seven months previously, of the famous stand of the British 6th Airborne Division (see Chapter 325). Below, a corner of the town after its liberation. There was little left intact, and the tasks of reconstruction were formidable

*Photo, Pictorial Press*



### NETHERLANDS PREMIER

Dr. P. S. Gerbrandy, Premier of the exiled Netherlands Government from September 1940 until its return after the liberation, visited Zeeland Flanders in November 1944 while heavy fighting was still going on. Author of the accompanying chapter, he is here (centre) inspecting damage at Breskens, accompanied by officials and townspeople.

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Nearly all the bridges, among them the mile-long railway and foot bridges at Moerdijk (the vital link between the north and south of the country—see map in page 3298) were destroyed. The destruction of houses surpassed that in any other country in Europe, and about three million people, nearly a third of the population, lost their homes. In the southern part, many little towns of south-western Zeeland were completely wiped out as a result of the fighting there in the autumn of 1944. In the south-east, towns like Venlo and Roermond were partly destroyed. The city of Nijmegen lost its beautiful centre. In the city of Arnhem, which had more than 100,000 inhabitants, every house was either completely demolished, or so severely damaged that little but the walls remained standing. For months in 1945 Arnhem was completely uninhabited. (For military activities in southern Holland, see Chapters 325, 332 and 349.) In The Hague, the Germans broke down different parts of the town in the preparation of their so-called defences, whilst another

### Destruction of Homes and Bridges



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**Rejoicing in Amsterdam** Certainly the people had had consolation during the last days prior to the liberation from the splendid organization which sent relief by air, and trucks laden with food and medicine were already coming in. Those who arranged these relief measures, wherein the greatest difficulties of organization and transport had to be overcome, and the preparation of which I still remember with the greatest admiration, thought only of the fact that every day 5,000 tons of food and coal had to be brought in over severely damaged roads to a starving population.

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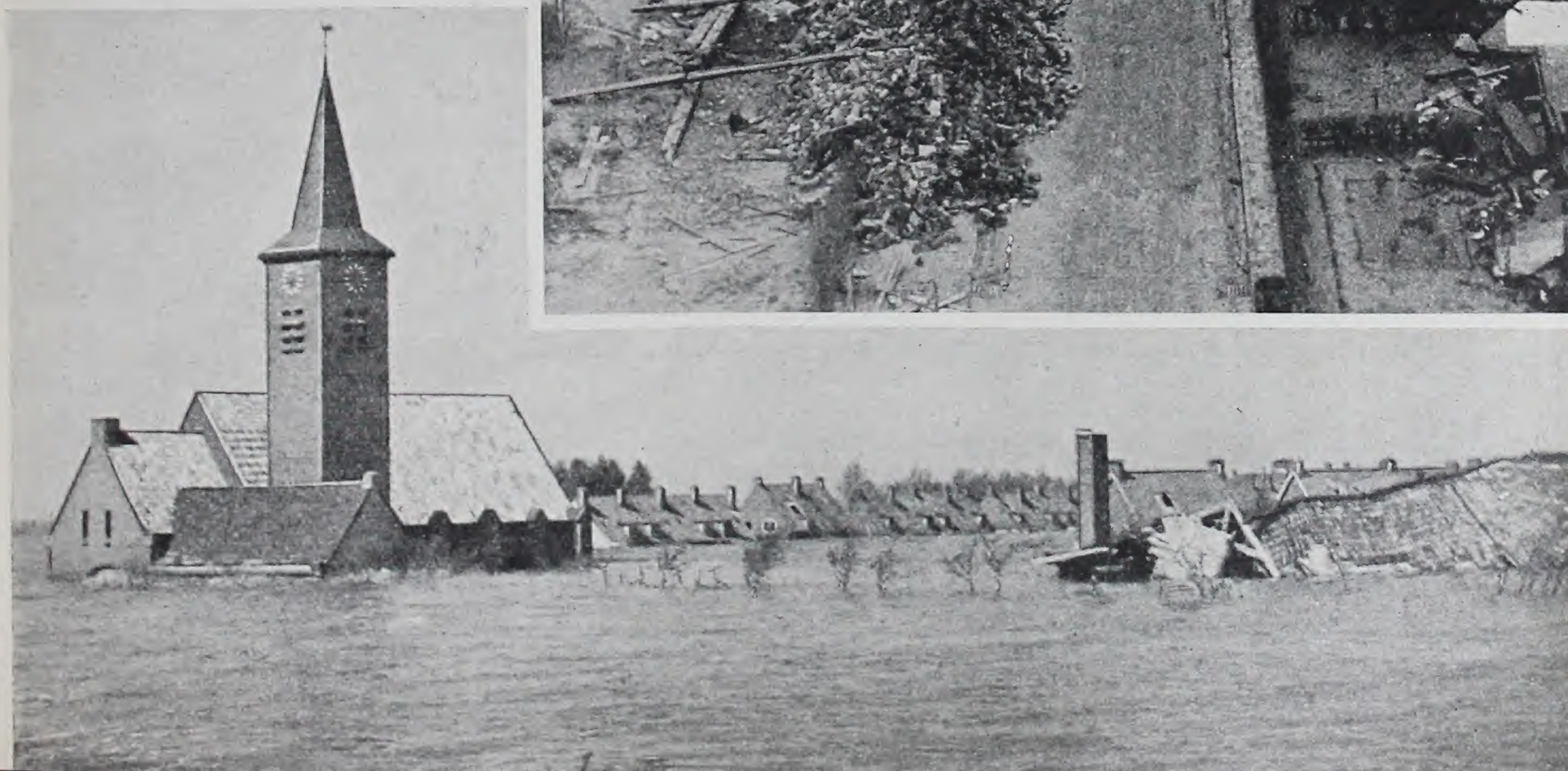
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#### IN FLOODED HOLLAND

Worst destruction wrought by the Germans in the Netherlands was the deliberate flooding of vast areas, including the most fertile acres in the country. As much as ten per cent of the arable land was inundated. Here is what remained of the centre of Middenmeer after the floods had subsided, leaving no house habitable. Below, Wieringerwerf, where the waters rose twenty feet. Both villages had been built on land reclaimed from the Zuider Zee twelve years before the Second Great War

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Immediately after the liberation, in accordance with the promise previously given (*see page 3214*), the Cabinet, on its return to the Netherlands, offered its resignation to Queen Wilhelmina who was at the time residing in a village near Breda in the south of the country. Some time elapsed before the Queen could get in touch with people who could advise her among those who had undergone the occupation, and who had gained the full confidence of the whole nation. It was among them that the Queen (in accordance with the constant pledge given by the resigning Cabinet)





Chap. 332). The flooded areas were among the most fertile in the Netherlands.

Although, once the Germans had been ejected, the soil thus lost could be reclaimed far more quickly than twenty years earlier, nevertheless in the most

**Gigantic Task of Restoration** seriously affected part it was bound to take many years to get the land back into good

condition. Even as late as the last days of April 1945, the Germans intentionally flooded the Wieringermeer, a polder reclaimed from the Zuider Zee twelve years before the outbreak of the war, and already covered with beautiful farms and villages. In some parts the soil is twenty feet below sea-level, so that even the farmhouses were completely covered with water. Fortunately the percentage of salt in the water of the former Zuider Zee was low; nevertheless all the houses had to be rebuilt. By August 1945 the dyke of this polder had been restored, and the rebuilding of the farmhouses and villages started before the end of 1945, but only years of effort would restore conditions to what they were before the inundations.

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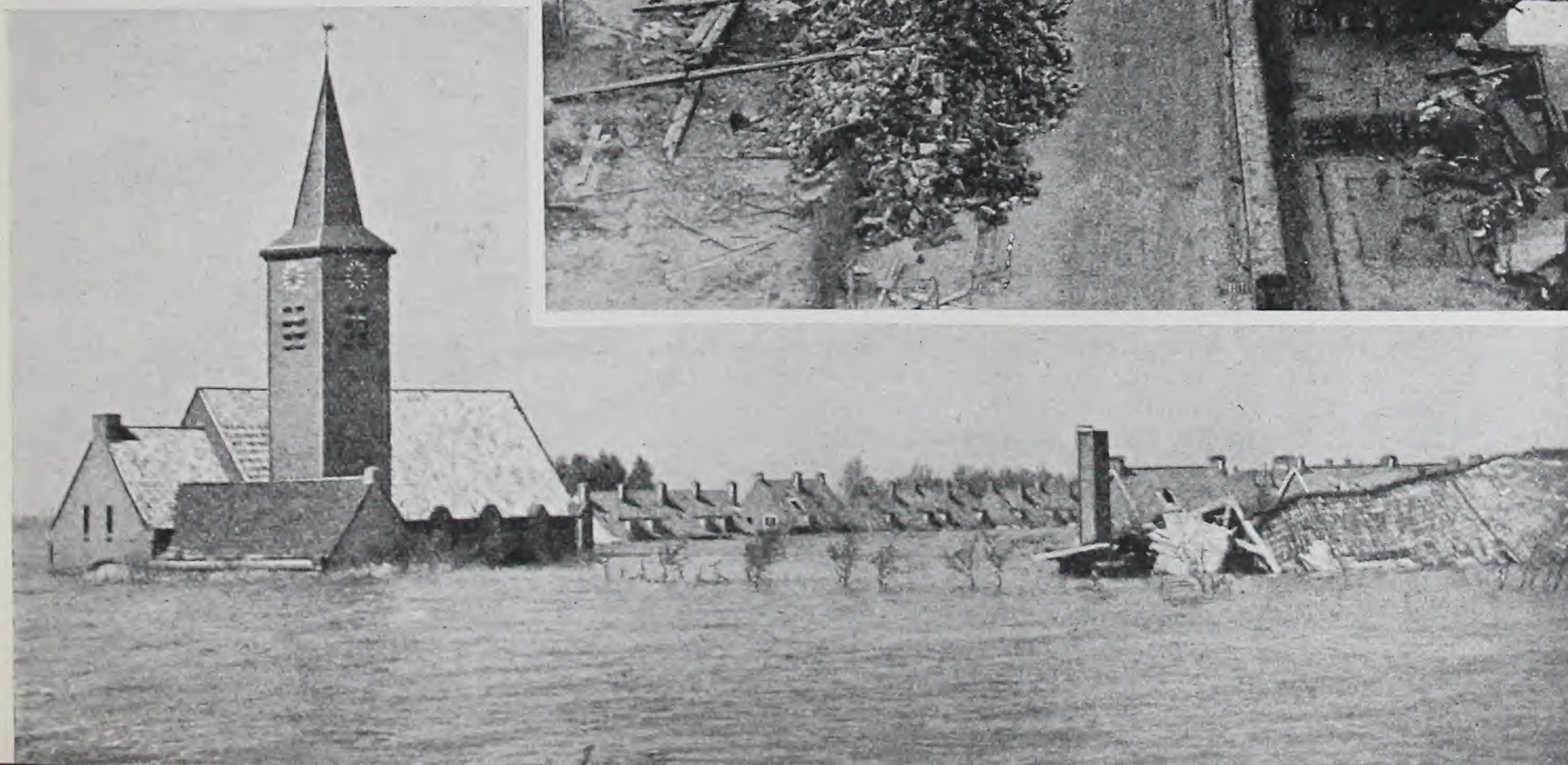
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### QUEEN WILHELMINA REOPENS THE STATES-GENERAL

For the first time since the German occupation, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands on November 20, 1945, opened the States-General. The ceremony was held, according to custom, in the magnificent Hall of the Knights in the Binnenhof at The Hague. Here Her Majesty, accompanied by Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard, reads the speech from the throne: one of her principal topics was the future of the Netherlands Indies.

*Photo, Pictorial Press*

was to find the person to form the new Cabinet. It was not easy to find a suitable person at once, for political life showed the marks of the occupation. Except for two parties, the former political parties were inactive, at least during the early days of the liberation. There was a movement towards greater unity, and it seemed appropriate to make use of that phenomenon. New forces had come to the front. It was not even certain that the old political parties would reappear in their former structure. For example, there had come into life a movement called "The Netherlands People's Movement" which included members of most former political parties.

One of its leaders, Professor Schermerhorn, a very able man, respected by everybody, and Mr. Drees, one of the prominent men of the Social Democratic Party, were finally charged with the formation of a new government.

On June 23, Mr. Schermerhorn and Mr. Drees named their proposed Cabinet to the Queen. It comprised fourteen Ministers, of whom six belonged to the Netherlands People's Movement, others to the different old political parties. Three members of the London Cabinet received portfolios in the new Govern-

ment, amongst them Mr. van Kleffens, who was reappointed Foreign Minister.

This new Cabinet had to face the most difficult tasks, politically as well as economically. There was no Parliament. Elections were quite impossible because patriots had destroyed the central registries in many towns (to make the Germans' task of government more difficult), and because the population had been scattered all over the country. When it is realized that many hundreds of people belonging to a little town like Dokkum in the north of Friesland, had been in hiding, and that elsewhere small villages were crowded with refugees from all parts of the Netherlands, that evacuation of the inundated areas had spread the population not only over the Netherlands, but also into Belgium and France, it will be understood that General Elections had to wait.

The Government formed an emergency Parliament consisting, for the greater part, of members of the old Parliament (after a purge of collaborators), with a few new members nominated by an organization formed from the political and resistance movements. Until the meeting of this new Parliament, the Government had to continue the London system of ruling by Royal Decree. This system had the disadvantage that the Government could not easily gauge the

spirit of the people, but had the practical advantage that the first measures of reconstruction were not slowed down by debates in Parliament.

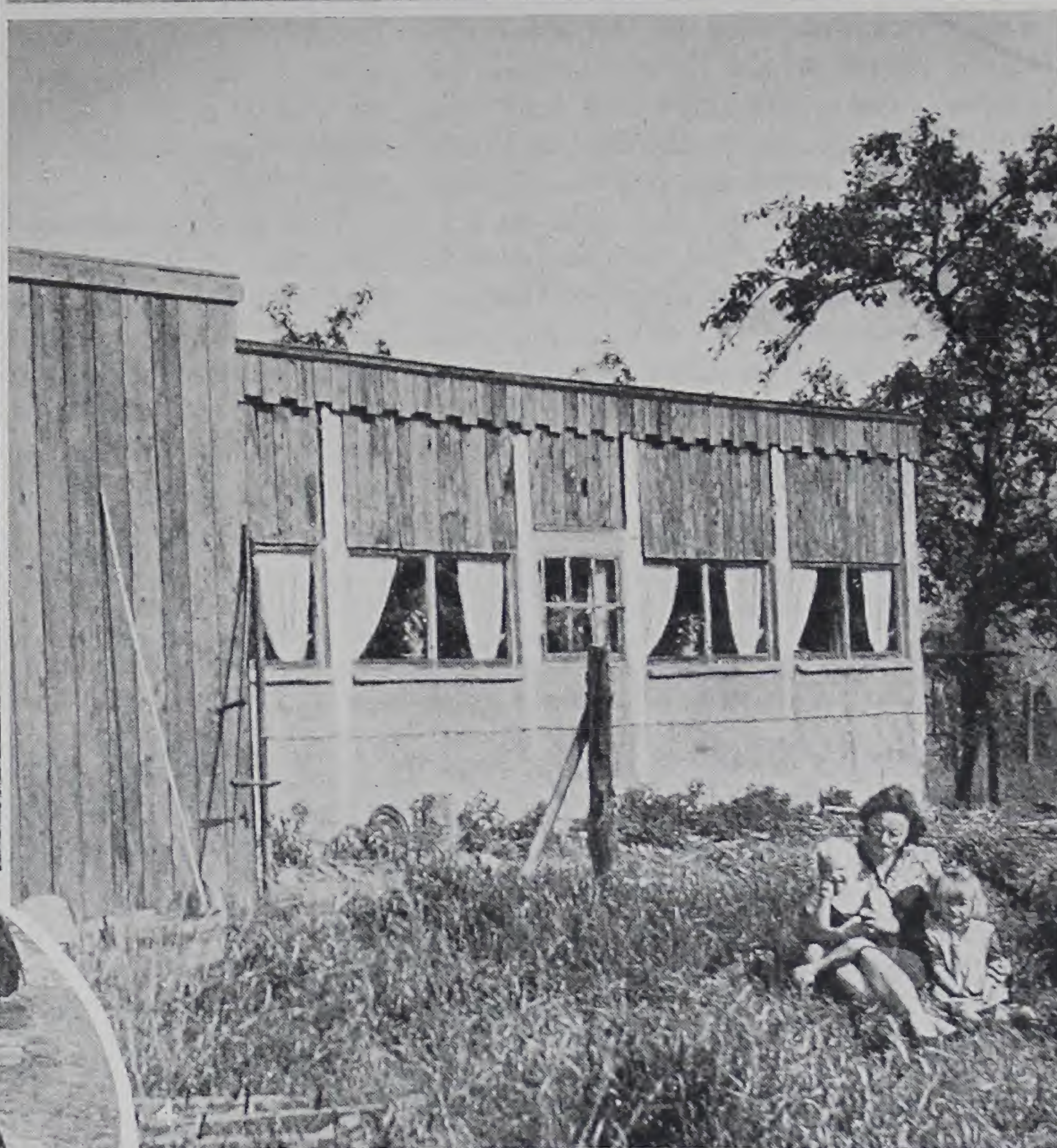
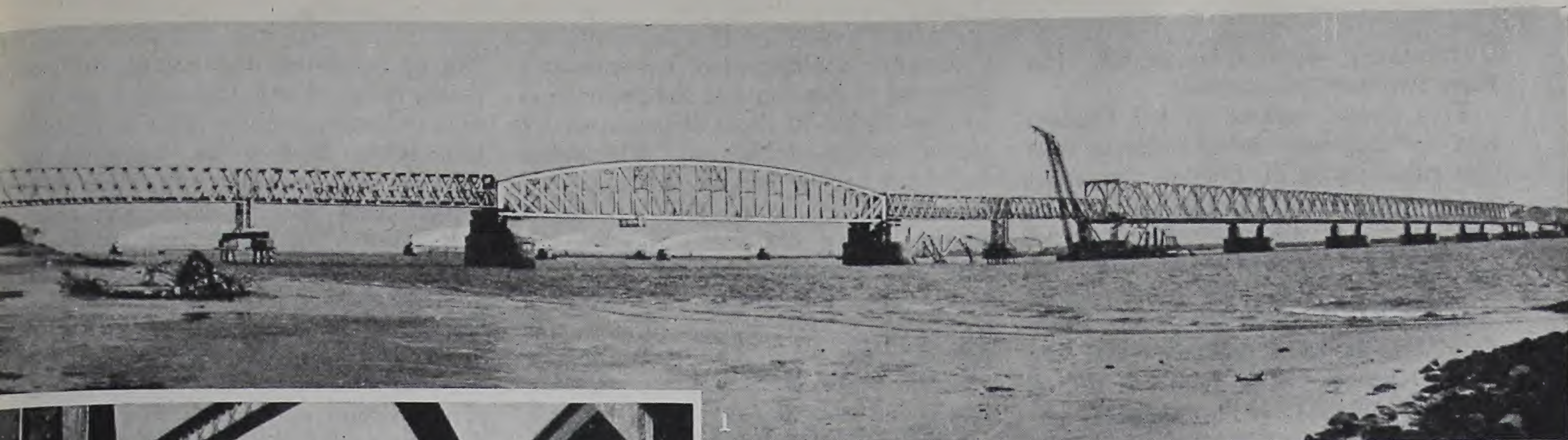
The task of reconstruction was a double one. The Government had to put into practice the measures already prepared by the Cabinet in London. It also had to pay immediate attention to economic reconstruction. Of course, in a country where the people had suffered so immeasurably from German terror and plunder, the tasks for the



### POST-WAR PREMIER

Successor to Dr. Gerbrandy (see illus. in page 3678) as Premier was Professor Willem Schermerhorn whose Cabinet was announced on June 23, 1945. Aged 51, he was a scientist and leader of the "Volksbeweging" (People's Movement) resistance organization during the occupation. The Germans held him as a hostage for some time.





### HOLLAND RISES AGAIN

1. The Moerdijk bridge, nearly a mile long, across the Hollandsche Diep, cut by the Germans in 1944, was reopened late in 1945. A 133-ft. long span from London's former temporary Waterloo bridge was used in the reconstruction. 2. A span of the new bridge at Oosterbeek, near Arnhem (see map in page 3304), also taken from Waterloo bridge. The longest of the Waterloo spans (280 feet) was used for the road-and-rail bridge over the Oude Maas at Dordrecht. 3. Dutch workmen plan a time-table for the use of their only hammer. 4. 'Home' of a family in the Betuwe near Arnhem. 5. The main square of Middelburg, capital of Walcheren,





Government were innumerable, but these two were pre-eminent.

Five special courts to try traitors and collaborators, in accordance with the rules made in London, were set up, in Amsterdam, The Hague, Utrecht,

**Dutch** s'Hertogenbosch and  
**Nazis** Leeuwarden, and each  
**Sentenced** Chamber of the Court

consisted of one President, two military members, and two civilian jurists. Many traitors, during the last months of 1945, were sentenced to death, amongst them Mussert and Van Genechten, two of the most detested leaders of the Dutch Nazi Movement. The condemned had only one form of appeal, i.e. to the Special Court of Cassation, and when sentenced, they could be deprived of the right to this form of appeal if the Court so decreed.

Tribunals to deal with minor trespassings, infringements of rights, and especially to advise about confiscation, internment, or deprivation of rights, were also set up all over the country; but they worked slowly.

#### DEFEATED NAZIS LEAVE THE NETHERLANDS

When the final collapse came German troops in Holland numbered 110,000. Disbandment under British and Canadian supervision began on May 9, 1945, when many Nazis were obliged to walk all the way to the Fatherland, so heavy were priority demands on transport, so badly disrupted were communications. Below, disbanded Germans embark in British L.C.T.s at Helden, near Amsterdam, for transport to Harlingen, in Friesland, and so home to the Reich.

Another application of the measures prepared in London was the restoration of legal rights to those dispossessed by the occupying authorities. Thousands had been robbed of their houses, their factories, their shares and their positions in the limited companies through the insidious German economic system of transferring the wealth of Dutchmen to Germany. But some restoration was possible, by returning to its former owners property found in German hands. Special legislation to this end, formulated by the London Government, amended and improved by the new Government, was put into practice, as well as a form of indemnification of those whose properties were completely lost.

Two of the most important economic measures were (1) the creation of a new stable currency, with complete replacement of the old paper notes by new bank notes, under the immediate control of the Minister of Finance, and with the collaboration of the banks all over the country; (2) the tackling of the prob-

lem of rebuilding the houses, bridges, roads, railways and factories, a process that under State control went on steadily into 1946. It is quite impossible to describe all the tasks which the new Government had to fulfil, but some others were the reorganization of the police, the building up of a new army (started already by the exiled Cabinet, but pressed forward by the development of happenings in the Pacific, after the breakdown of Japan and the emergence of nationalist movements in Java and elsewhere), and the repatriation of the enslaved Dutch workers, which at first met with great obstacles, but was, by the end of December 1945, already nearly achieved.

Generally speaking, economic reconstruction went on satisfactorily. As one example of quick reconstruction, I mention that by the end of the year the bridge over the Moerdijk had been rebuilt and put into use. Others could be given from other parts of the country. Able Ministers were trying to effect the recovery of the Netherlands, the first period of indolence of the population was over, and everywhere there was hope that the process would continue satisfactorily. There were, of course, complaints to be heard in some critical





circles—one was that the new Cabinet did not sufficiently exercise its authority when preparing and putting into practice its measures. Here lay one of the most vulnerable spots in the political and spiritual condition of the Netherlands.

What the people expected was a quick revival of all the old institutions, so cruelly trampled down by the Germans. They assumed that traitors and collaborators would be summarily dealt with, the press would be brought to life again, the voice of local representatives and of Parliament would be heard clearly, and so on. But to achieve all these things, men and means were needed. In a country so unscrupulously robbed of its élite and so thoroughly plundered, men and means proved inadequate to produce a quick solution of the problems confronting the country. People and Government toiled long to overcome obstacles.

There was insufficient paper to print anything like pre-war newspapers; the conditions of transport and communications very often did not allow even important officials to fulfil their duties. The administration of public affairs was in many departments in such a state that much-needed information could not be made available to Parliament; even as late as August 1945

it was barely possible to telephone from The Hague to Middelburg. The Resistance Movement asked for a rigid purge, but the fact that some tens of thousands had to be detained pending trial and after created the problem of providing prisons and camps.

At the end of 1945 there was a feeling that conditions were not as gratifying as the day of liberation had promised. Over the budgetary position of the public finances, notwithstanding the excellent measures taken by the Minister of Finance, hung the threatening shadow of expenditure three or four times as great as had been allowed for.

Recovering loot from Germany, where in one farm could be found thousands of sheets and blankets, many pianos, hundreds of radio sets, accumulations of food and other valuable commodities all stolen from the Dutch, seemed a good idea. But theory and practice differed somewhat. And to all the difficulties at home was suddenly added the emergence of a situation in the

Far East which was also complicated by lack of men and means.

Nevertheless, the reconstruction achieved by the end of 1945 could be regarded with satisfaction, and political life anticipated a considerable strengthening from the general elections held, as the Government had promised, in May 1946.

#### Rebirth of Political Life

That the people had not lost their old desire to share in the political and spiritual interests of the country and the world was shown by the fact that papers started underground during the occupation, and published openly after liberation, were very widely read. The anti-revolutionary paper "Trouw" (Faith) had nearly half a million subscribers; "Het Parool" (Watchword) about 400,000, figures never attained by any paper before the war. Among the people was an insistent desire for literature of every kind.

It was, of course, inevitable that much time should elapse before the

#### HOLLAND'S QUEEN PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE DEAD

Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands returned to her country on May 3, 1945—three days before the Germans there surrendered. Early in March she had paid her first visit since the occupation when she made a nine-days' tour of liberated areas. She is seen watching Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard lay a wreath at the reburial ceremony (in November), near Haarlem, of the bodies, found in the nearby sand-dunes, of 400 murdered Dutch patriots.

*Photo, Planet News*





# TRANSITION TO PEACE IN FRANCE

*General de Gaulle's Provisional Government, re-established in Paris in August 1944 (see Chapter 335), sought to lead France to political and economic recovery. The elections of October 1945, however, gave three parties an almost equal number of seats in the Constituent Assembly, and the difficulties arising from tripartite government led to General de Gaulle's resignation early in 1946. Mr. Georges Gombault here tells the history of this unsettled period*

**D**URING the first part of 1945, the Provisional Government exercised both legislative and executive powers. The Consultative Assembly (see pages 2915 and 3412) discussed the general lines of the Budget, debated foreign policy, called Ministers to account and voted against them. But no notice was taken of its remonstrances; the Government did not regard itself as bound to follow the Assembly's advice.

An opposition began to form in the Consultative Assembly. The purge was regarded as insufficient. The food shortage, a main cause of popular discontent, led to the fall of one Minister of Food after another.

The criticism extended to the whole direction of economic affairs. Economic and financial policy was naturally among the main preoccupations of the Government. Since the return from Algeria to France, two opposing views had been advocated. Mr. Mendès-France, Minister of National Economy, advocated a policy of great firmness, of which stabilization of prices and wages formed an essential part; Mr. Plevin, Minister of Finance, favoured a less drastic cure. General de Gaulle decided in favour of the second method, and the Government supported him. Mr. Mendès-France resigned. But he was justified in the event, for his plan was revived in 1946 by the Gouin Ministry.

The municipal elections in towns and communes ended the existence of the local Liberation committees (see page 3409). These elections took place on April 23: the French had not gone to the polls since 1937. The elections had not a marked political character. In many communes the lists had been made up of resisters belonging to all parties. One conclusion did, however, emerge from these elections, that the country was strongly attached to the democratic Republic.

The cantonal elections for the Conseils Généraux (virtually county councils) took place on September 23, and were more markedly political. The parties

faced each other in each canton. The results foreshadowed those of the elections for the Constituent Assembly: the parties of the extreme Left had great success; the Popular Republican Movement (M.R.P.) won some seats, the Radicals lost some; the Right was overwhelmed.

As a result of these two elections, the parties began to pull themselves together. The Socialist and Communist parties, which had come to life again in the underground movement, sought to re-establish their pre-war organizations. The Radical party, which had never had a very solid structure, tried to strengthen its ranks. The moderates remained dispersed as before. The M.R.P. (see page 3410) endeavoured, with the support of the Church, to form the Catholics into a group and to steer them towards social democracy. The unrepentant Right, which had been Pétain's main support, did not dare to make any move as yet.

A purge of the leaders followed in all parties. It was particularly rigorous among the Socialists, who excluded

from their ranks the deputies and senators (unfortunately numerous) who had voted for Pétain in the National Assembly of July 10, 1940, at Vichy: the former general secretary of the party, Mr. Paul Faure, was the first to be expelled. The procedure among the Radicals was less strict, but men like Mr. Camille Chautemps, vice-president (i.e. deputy speaker) in the Pétain Ministry, and Mr. Georges Bonnet were struck off the membership of the party. The task of the Communists was simpler, because those of their leaders and their most active members who had not fled abroad were in prison in July 1940: Mr. Daladier had had them arrested after the conclusion of the Russo-German pact of August 1939. The moderate parties confined themselves to bringing to the fore those of their members who had taken part in the Resistance.

In the course of 1945, the members of the Resistance rejoined their respective political families, bringing to

## Purge of Political Leaders

## THE END OF HITLER'S 'ATLANTIC WALL'

Demolishing the 'Atlantic Wall' (see illus. in page 2905)—which Hitler had boasted was impregnable—occupied French workmen in the early months of 1945. It had been constructed by the Todt Organization largely with forced labour, and covered long stretches of the French and Belgian seaboard. Below, workmen break up a section of the defences in a French coastal town.

*Photo, Planet News*





threads of normal life in the Netherlands could be picked up once more. At the turn of the year life in Holland still wore a strange complexion. The Queen was still living, not in her palace at The Hague, but in an ordinary house. During the winter of 1945-46 people received only ten per cent of the fuel they needed. The public crowded into the open cars of the few available trams on the coldest winter days even in The Hague, which is the very fountain head of the administration and the Government.

Mountainous difficulties had still to be overcome in the field of foreign



#### COAL FAMINE

In the winter preceding the liberation of Holland, one of the scarcest necessities was coal. Official ration for the whole winter was less than half-a-ton per family. These Netherlands are salvaging water-logged coal from sunken colliers brought up in the course of dredging operations in the North Sea-Amsterdam canal.

trade, and of the acquisition of much-needed raw materials.

A gigantic task lay before the Dutch. But they had regained the freedom they love so much; in the months between June and November 1945 their apparent inertia disappeared. The Queen, descendant of the House of Orange, was the symbol of national unity, as her reception by the population of Amsterdam in July 1945 showed. The way might be long, but the Netherlands was on her feet again.



#### HOLLAND'S QUISLING SENTENCED TO DEATH

Anton Mussert, leader of the Dutch National Socialist Party, was arrested by Canadian troops in Utrecht on May 7, 1945 and executed exactly a year later. He is seen (above) during his trial, which began in November before the Supreme Court in The Hague. Queen Wilhelmina refused his request for pardon, and the death-penalty—reintroduced in Holland for the punishment of traitors—was inflicted.

*Photo, Keystone*



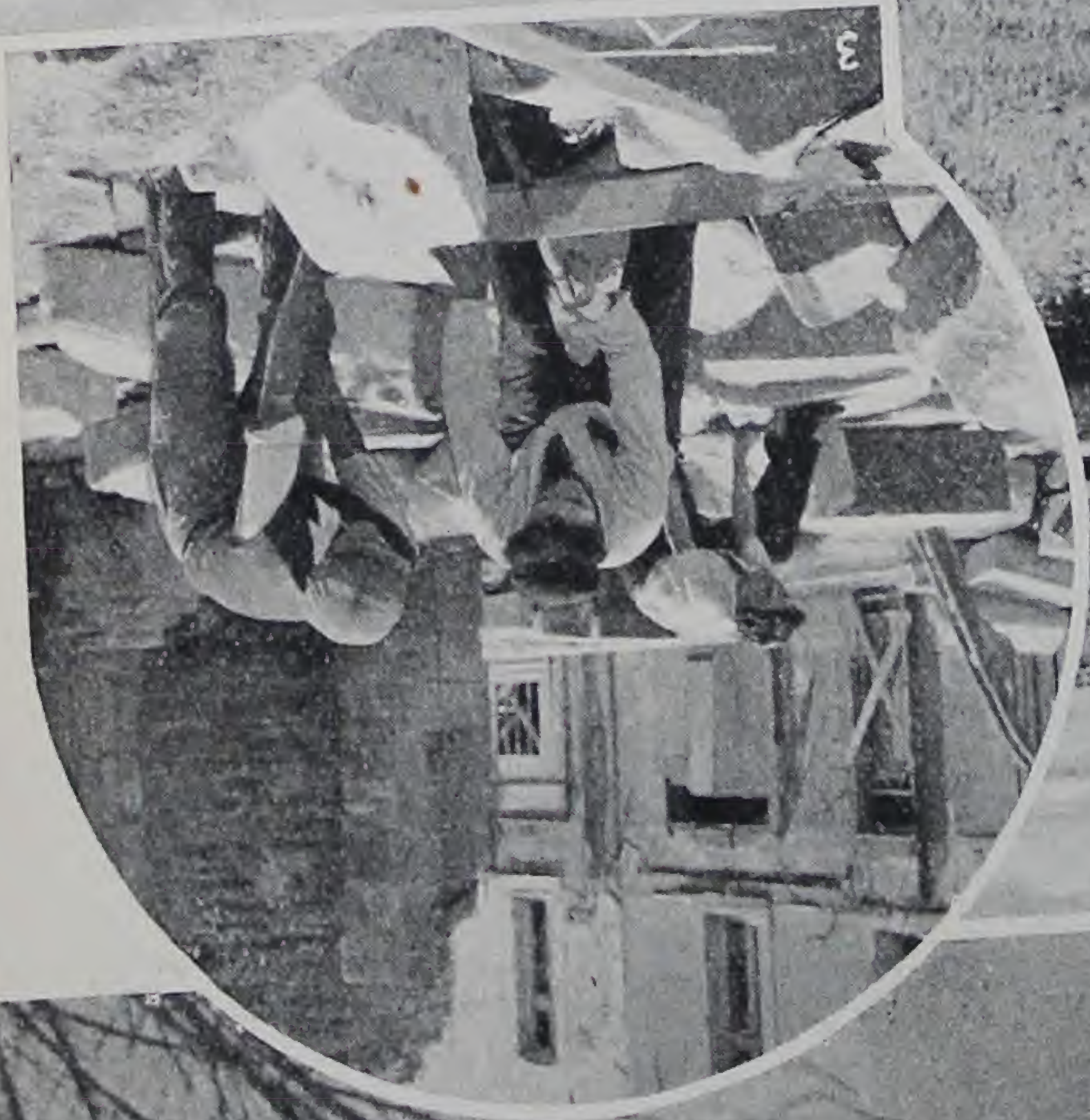
#### A HERO'S GRAVE IN THE NETHERLANDS

On the battlefields of the Netherlands—scene of some of the bitterest fighting of the war—lie buried where they fell thousands of British and Canadian soldiers. In many places the inhabitants undertook to tend the graves in perpetuity in memory of the men who gave their lives to free Holland. Here a Netherlands woman lays flowers on a British soldier's grave near Arnhem.





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### STAMPS RAISE FUNDS FOR RECONSTRUCTION

To assist in the raising of funds for the rebuilding of Breton and Norman towns badly damaged in the war, special postage stamps were issued early in 1945. They depicted the towns as the Germans had left them. Those reproduced above show Dunkirk, Rouen, St. Malo, and Caen. A fifth was of Oradour-sur-Glane (see page 3403) which is to remain in ruins as a memorial to German ruthlessness.

*Photo, French Official*

them, however, a new spirit. An assembly calling itself the States-General of the French Renaissance met in Paris on July 10-11 to reaffirm this programme. That assembly was the last political demonstration by the Resistance.

After the municipal elections in the spring, public opinion expected a change in the composition of the Government.

There was a rumour Ministerial Changes that Mr. Edouard Herriot and Mr. Léon Blum, who had just returned from captivity, would be appointed Ministers of State, together with one of the moderates, Mr. Louis Marin, who had gone to London in 1944. The offer was in fact made to Herriot and Blum, but both declined to take office. General de Gaulle then considered a thorough ministerial reshuffle, but in the end very little change was effected—the Minister of Food resigned and two others were moved to different offices.

Public opinion was disappointed. In its political fanaticism, Vichy had deprived the administration of its best servants, and the new administration was unequal to its task, some of the elements that had replaced the collaborators proving insufficiently experienced. Finally, the nation was ill-satisfied with the methods of the Government: there were complaints that the Government was exercising uncontrolled power and at the same

time that it was not showing enough firmness in the management of public affairs. This state of opinion found expression in the elections for the Conseils-Généraux of September 23, in which Socialists and Communists repeated their success at the municipal elections. The September elections marked the appearance of popular



### NEW BANKNOTES FOR OLD IN PARIS

In an attempt to check the widespread activities of the black market, the French Provisional Government in June 1945 ordered the compulsory changing of old banknotes for new. Here in the French capital a crowd of Parisians line up outside the branch of a famous bank to exchange their old notes for those of the new issue.

*Photo, Keystone*

democratic candidates of the M.R.P. which strengthened its position in the subsequent legislative elections.

There was much in common between these democrats of the M.R.P. and the Socialist Party; but they were divided on a question of supreme importance in France, that of secular Catholic School Grants Suppressed education. The M.R.P., reviving the old demands of the Catholics in education, claimed government grants for Catholic schools. The Socialists held to Republican doctrine and practice: all children, whatever their parents' creed, if any, can attend the government schools, which are neutral: it is for the groups that open "free" schools to support them. The issue came before the Consultative Assembly. The question was whether the grants made to Catholic schools by Vichy should be continued. It was decided by 128 votes to 48 to suppress them. The majority was formed by the Radicals, Socialists, and Communists; the minority by the Right wing and the M.R.P.

The question of the future institutions of France, widely discussed both in the press and in the Consultative Assembly, had to be decided. Should there be a restoration of the Constitution of 1875, which had in fact been suppressed only by Vichy; or should an entirely new Constitution be worked out? The Radicals favoured the first solution; the Resistance, the Socialists, and the



Communists the second. The Consultative Assembly pronounced in favour of a fully sovereign Constituent Assembly, to be elected by proportional representation; it opposed the submission of the question to a referendum.

The Provisional Government, however, was against a single Assembly with full sovereignty—it felt that the

#### Decision to Hold Referendum

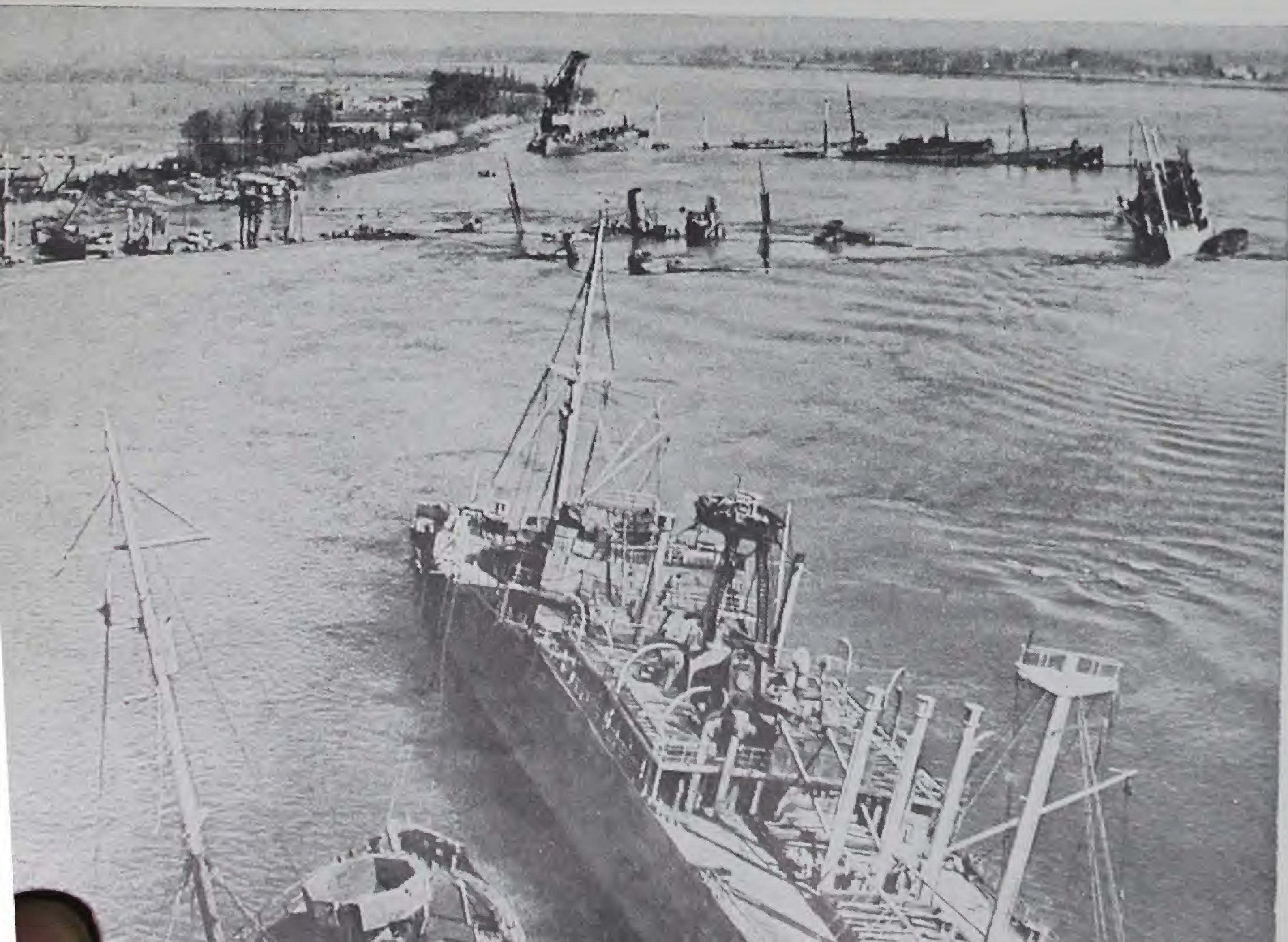
Assembly's powers should be limited; and it decided on a referendum, to be held on the same day as the general elections, on the two questions (1) Do you wish the Assembly to be a Constituent one? (2) Do you agree that the powers exercised by this Assembly—until the coming into force of the new Constitution—should be those laid down in the proposed law [the text of which was given on the back of the referendum form]?

The Socialists, the M.R.P., the Right wing, and in general all followers of General de Gaulle, recommended the answer "Yes" in both cases; the Communists, who wanted a single sovereign Assembly, recommended "Yes" and "No"; the Radicals advocated the answer "No" to both questions (which would have meant that the body elected would have become a new Chamber of Deputies, the election of a Senate would have followed, and the two bodies sitting together as a National Assembly would have drafted a Constitution).

#### FRENCH FREE THE PORT OF BORDEAUX

Although the town of Bordeaux was liberated by the F.F.I. on August 31, 1944, it remained useless as a port, since the Germans still held the Gironde estuary. Not till April 1945 did General Leclerc attack the enemy garrison there, overcoming the last German resistance, and reopening the port to shipping on April 19. These wrecked enemy supply ships (below) cluttered the harbour.

*Photo, Evening Standard*



#### THEY WERE FORCED TO FIGHT FOR HITLER

When the provinces of Alsace-Lorraine were reincorporated into the Reich on December 1, 1940, after the defeat of France, men eligible for military service were henceforth compulsorily drafted into the Wehrmacht. Among them were these troops who were taken prisoner by the Russians and later sent back to France. They are at the Gare du Nord, Paris, in October 1945, on their homeward journey, still wearing German uniforms.

*Photo, Keystone*

The election campaign was lively but not disorderly. The country voted on October 21. It replied to the two questions of the referendum in the way General de Gaulle had advocated: there were more than 15,656,283 votes

for a Constituent Assembly, 596,743 against; 10,847,925 votes for relative limitation of the powers of the single Assembly, 5,381,106 against.

On the same day the Deputies were elected—522 in France and 64 in the Colonies. The Socialists obtained 139 seats, the Communists 150, and the M.R.P. 149. The remainder of the seats went to the

#### New Assembly Meets

Radicals (who suffered a crushing defeat, securing only 25 seats), and smaller groups. The new Assembly met on November 3. Its first task was to designate the head of the Government, General de Gaulle having placed his resignation before it. He was elected unanimously. But he met with difficulties in forming his Cabinet and resigned.

The Constituent Assembly had to choose a new head of the Government. It nominated General de Gaulle again, but this time not unanimously. A long debate followed, at the end of which the Assembly pronounced for a Ministry in which the three big parties should be equally represented.

General de Gaulle then formed his Ministry as follows: five Socialists, five Communists, five members of the M.R.P., and six "experts": this term referred to persons chosen by General de Gaulle and particularly attached to him. A novelty was the appointment of



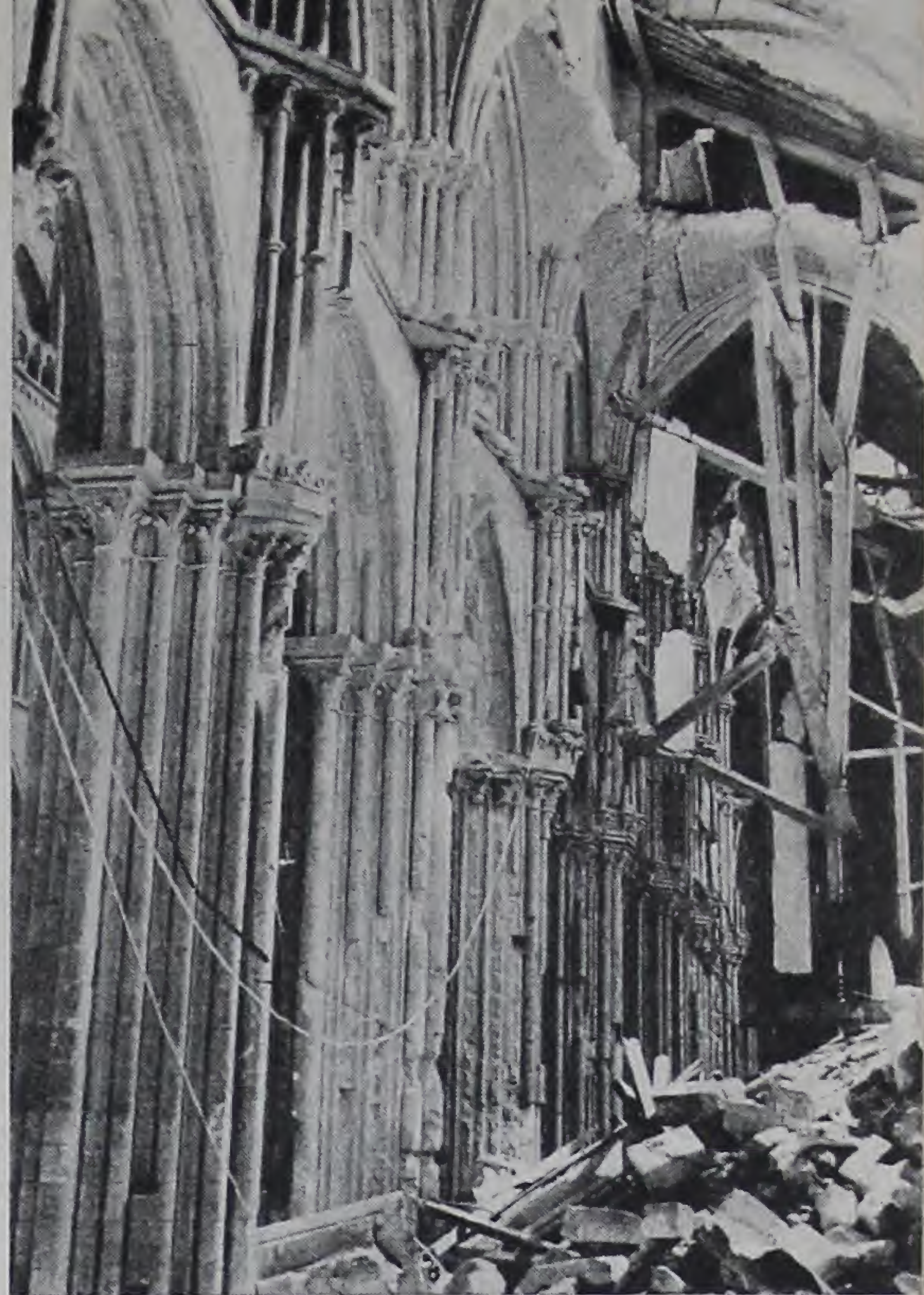
Mr. Maurice Thorez, leader of the Communist party, as Minister of State, and the appointment of another Communist to the Ministry of Armaments. During the first phase of the crisis, General de Gaulle had excluded the members of that party, but he accepted them under pressure from the Assembly; he also agreed to confide to them a share in the Ministry of National Defence, which at first he had refused to do. Mr. Thorez, who had been condemned in his absence in 1939 by a military tribunal, was pardoned.

General de Gaulle attended the Constituent Assembly, and obtained a unanimous vote of confidence. The first measure he submitted for adoption was

the nationalization of credit: four big deposit banks were nationalized. The commercial banks were, however, simply made subject to control, to the disappointment of both the Socialists and Communists.

Public discontent led to acrimonious debates, notably on the claims of civil servants, who demanded a cost-of-living increase; the Minister of Finance pointed to the situation of the country and agreed only to a partial satisfaction of their demand. A threatened strike of civil servants was averted; their demands continued.

The situation grew more uneasy as the discussion of the Budget proceeded.



#### DAMAGE IN ROUEN

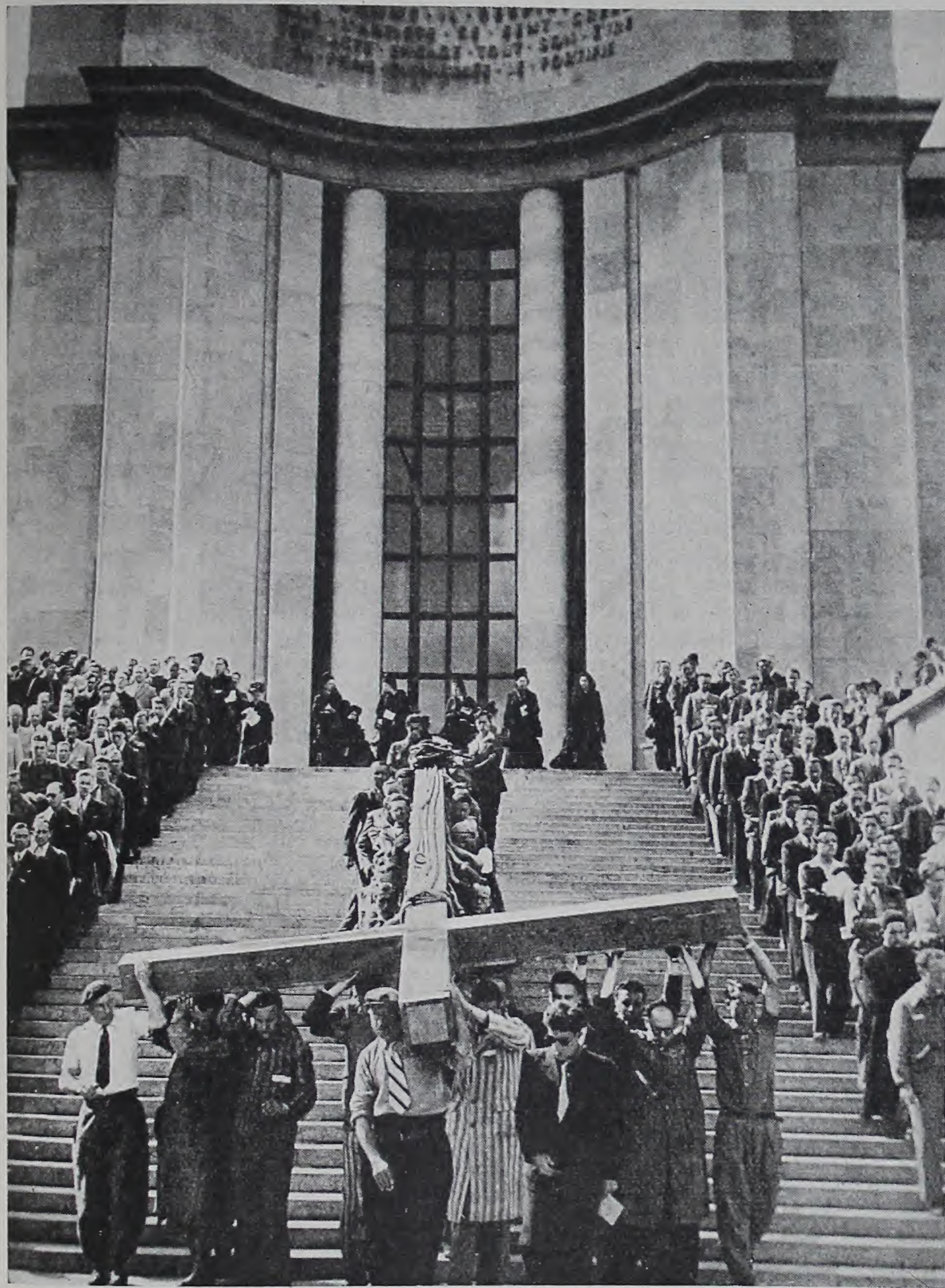
When the 1st Canadian Army took Rouen on August 30, 1944, they found it extensively damaged both by enemy demolitions and previous Allied bombings (see illus. in page 3199). As the Germans escaped across the Seine, they blew up the Palais de Justice, the telephone exchange and the railway station. Here is a shattered corner of the famous cathedral, heavily bombed in air raids and found to be partly gutted.

*Photo, French Official*

The German occupation, involving a charge of 400 million francs a day for the maintenance of the army of occupation, and the Vichy regime had ruined French finances. The Budget totalled 400 milliards of francs, and the deficit was estimated at more than 200 milliards. The Constituent Assembly was urged by the Government to act swiftly and the Budget was pushed through with such rapidity that neither the Finance Committee nor the Assembly was able to exercise the rigorous control which is incumbent on a Parliament, and which the situation demanded.

#### Budget Discussions

Military expenditure was a heavy burden—it approached 200 milliards. On January 1, 1946, the Socialists demanded that it should be cut by 20 per cent. General de Gaulle would agree only to a five per cent cut, apart from possible economies resulting from the bill for the reorganization of the army. The Socialists held to their point of view all the more strongly since there was public indignation at certain abuses due to the lack of parliamentary control. In the end a compromise was effected: the 20 per cent cut was to come into force automatically on February 15 if the bill for

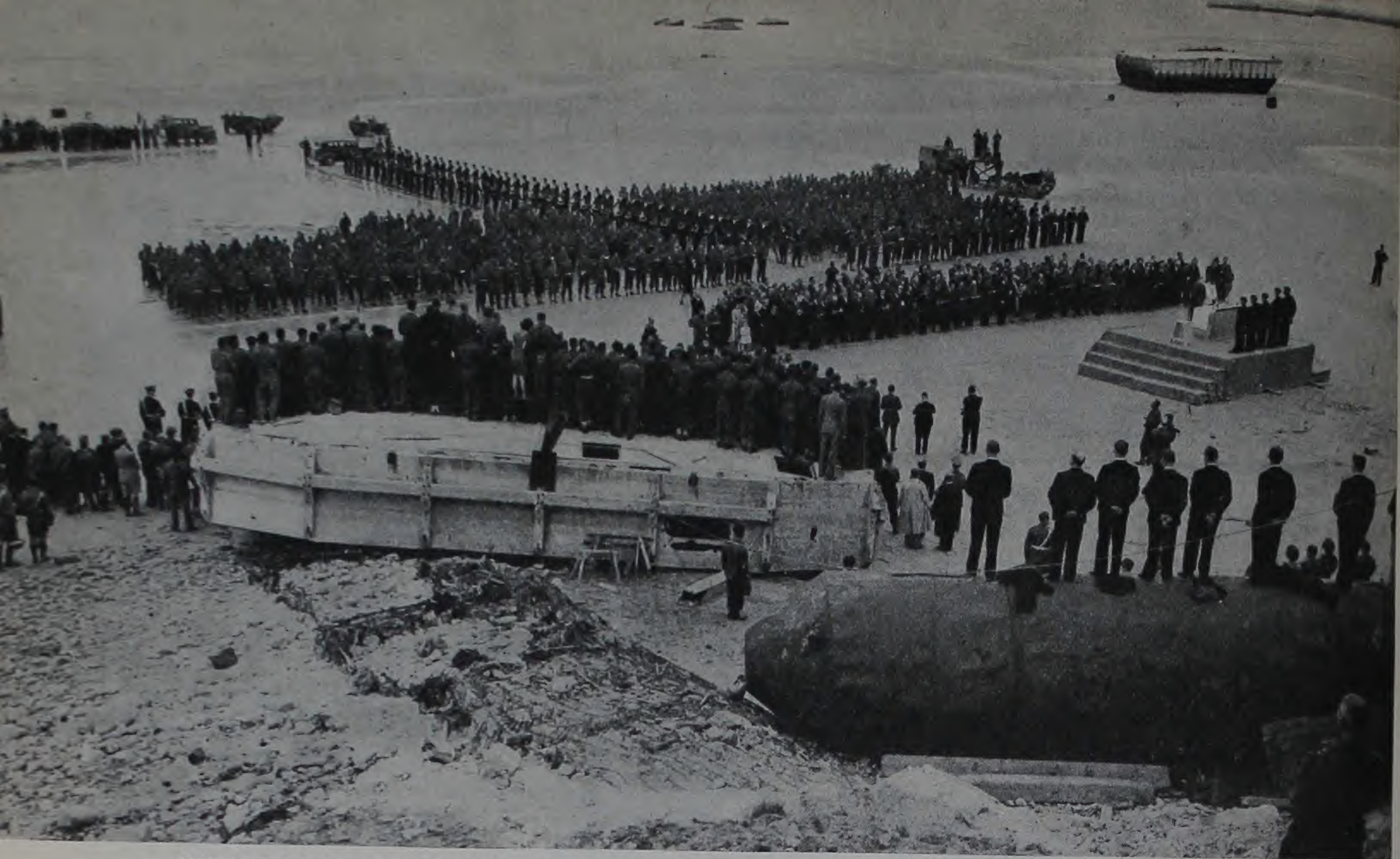


#### FRANCE HONOURS VICTIMS OF NAZIDOM

It was estimated that the victims of German reprisals in France alone left almost 140,000 orphans. Here is an open-air service held in Paris in July 1945 to the memory of victims of Nazi brutality. The huge wooden cross—to be erected as a memorial—was carried by patriots freed from concentration camps, some of them wearing the striped prison uniform.

*Photo, Planet News*





## INVASION DAY REMEMBERED ON NORMANDY BEACHES

To mark the first anniversary of the invasion of western Europe, religious ceremonies and military parades were held on June 6, 1945, on the Normandy beaches where the first assault waves came in. At Arromanches (above) a religious service was attended by the British and United States ambassadors to France and by French Cabinet Ministers. Remains of 'Mulberry B' harbour can be seen on the horizon.

*Photo, British Newspaper Pool*

military reorganization effecting this saving was not introduced by that date. The Left was unwilling either to give way or to provoke a crisis.

This debate led to a hot political controversy between the representatives of the Socialist Party, particularly Mr. André Philip, and General de Gaulle. Mr. Philip claimed that government should be through the Assembly: the Prime Minister, once he had been appointed, must carry out the decisions of Parliament. General de Gaulle contended that the head of the Government should not be a mere instrument of the Assembly but should enjoy real authority. He hinted at resignation: "This, no doubt," he said, "is the last time I shall speak in this place."

This sitting of January 1 was perhaps the most important of the session. The latent disagreement between the parties of the Left and General de Gaulle came plainly into view. The head of the Government was left with only one faithful supporter, the Popular Republican Movement; and this group of 150 members was insufficient to assure the existence of the Ministry.

After this Parliamentary encounter,

General de Gaulle went to the south of France, to Cap d'Antibes, for a few days' rest. The Assembly met again on January 15. It held a discussion on foreign policy, in the course of which there was in particular a demand for the breaking off of relations with Franco. General de Gaulle appeared in the Assembly only once during this two-day debate: he intervened simply to reply to Mr. Herriot, who attacked him with some severity; he seemed indifferent to the outcome of the debate.

This quasi-abstention was the more striking since, as was well known, General de Gaulle was interested above all in foreign policy. It was explained when on January 21 he sent to the President of the Consultative Assembly his letter of resignation as head of the Provisional Government of the Republic: "In agreeing," he wrote, "to remain at the head of the Government after November 13, 1945, my purpose was to respond to the unanimous appeal which the National Constituent Assembly had addressed to me and to see through the necessary transition. This transition has today been accomplished."

Public opinion accepted General de Gaulle's retirement calmly, but his

optimism seemed a contradiction of the real situation of the country, which was still suffering cruel privations. The "Monde" wrote of a "premature departure," but considered that it was impossible for General de Gaulle to "remain at a post in which his role of arbiter was vain."

Both people in general and political circles wondered as to the reasons that had determined General de Gaulle to retire and whether he had departed without any intention of returning.

**General  
de Gaulle  
Retires**

The general opinion was that he had abandoned power because, with his authoritarian nature, he despaired of carrying into effect his conception of government. Was he ready to return? If, declared certain newspapers, circumstances should one day require it, he would respond to the country's appeal, but outside the parties. The General himself, in his retreat at Marly-le-Roi, refrained from any declaration. He spent his time writing his memoirs, reading, taking walks, and talking with a few friends.

By 497 votes out of 552, the Assembly appointed Mr. Félix Gouin, its President (a position approximating to that of Speaker in the House of Commons), as General de Gaulle's successor. Mr. Gouin, aged 61, a Marseilles lawyer, Socialist deputy for Aix-en-Provence in the pre-war Chamber, voted against Pétain in 1940, and afterwards





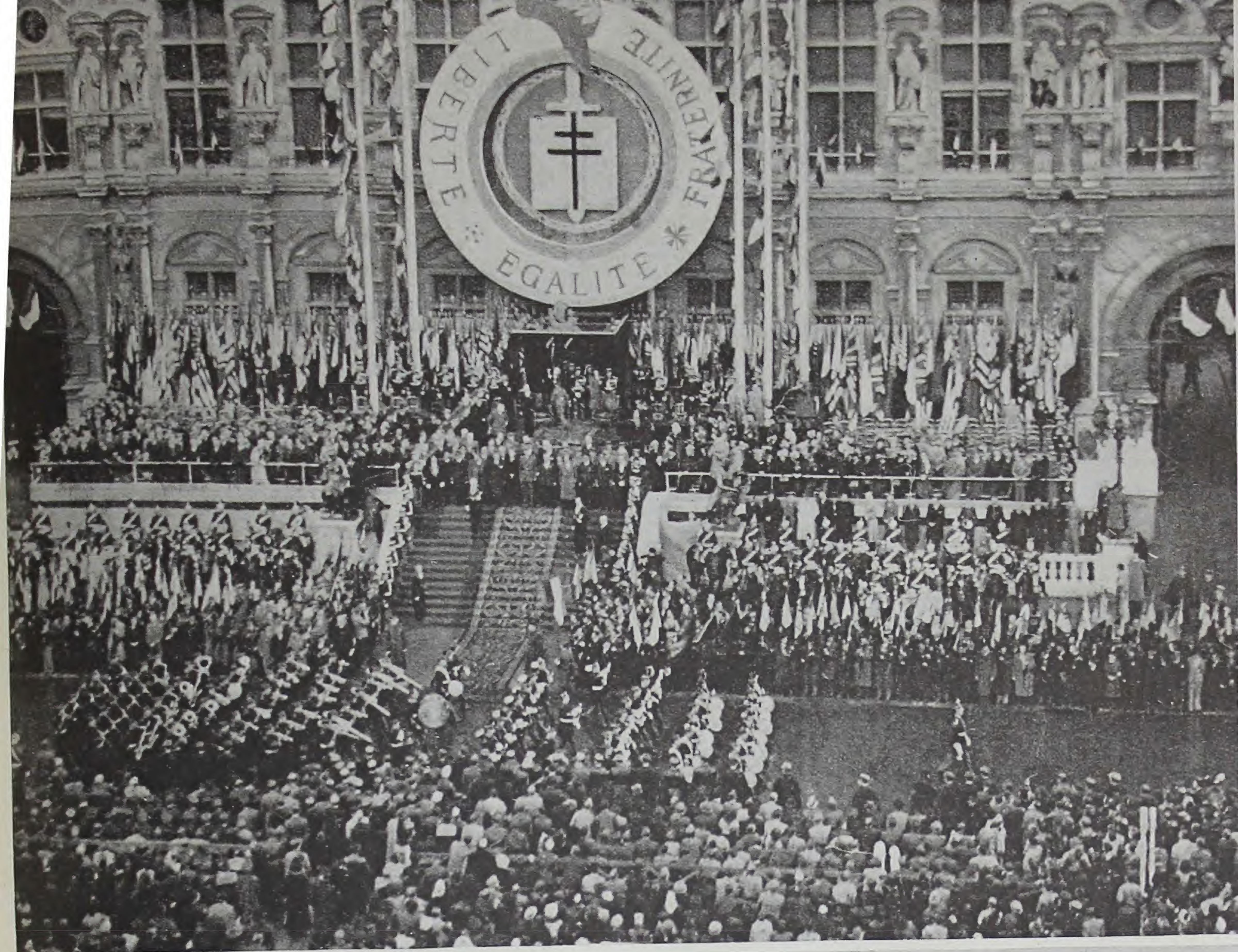
## SWIMMING TANKS ON THE RHINE

One of the most important British war inventions was the 'D.D.' (Duplex-Drive) amphibious tank (see also page 3666), which took the Germans by surprise during the Normandy landings, and was subsequently used in the Scheldt estuary, during the crossings of the Rhine and Elbe, and in northern Italy. Buoyancy was achieved by a collapsible screen of treated canvas fitted to the hull of the tank which could be raised and inflated (with compressed air stored in bottles—see photograph above), or lowered at will. Erected, the screen completely surrounded the tank above the tracks (as seen on right), enabling it to float. At the touch of a lever the screen collapsed to lie like a skirt about the hull. When water-borne, the tank was propelled by screws at the rear driven by the main driving-shaft. A modified form of the Davis Escape Apparatus, as used by submarine crews, was carried in case of accident.

*Photos, British Official;  
Associated Press*







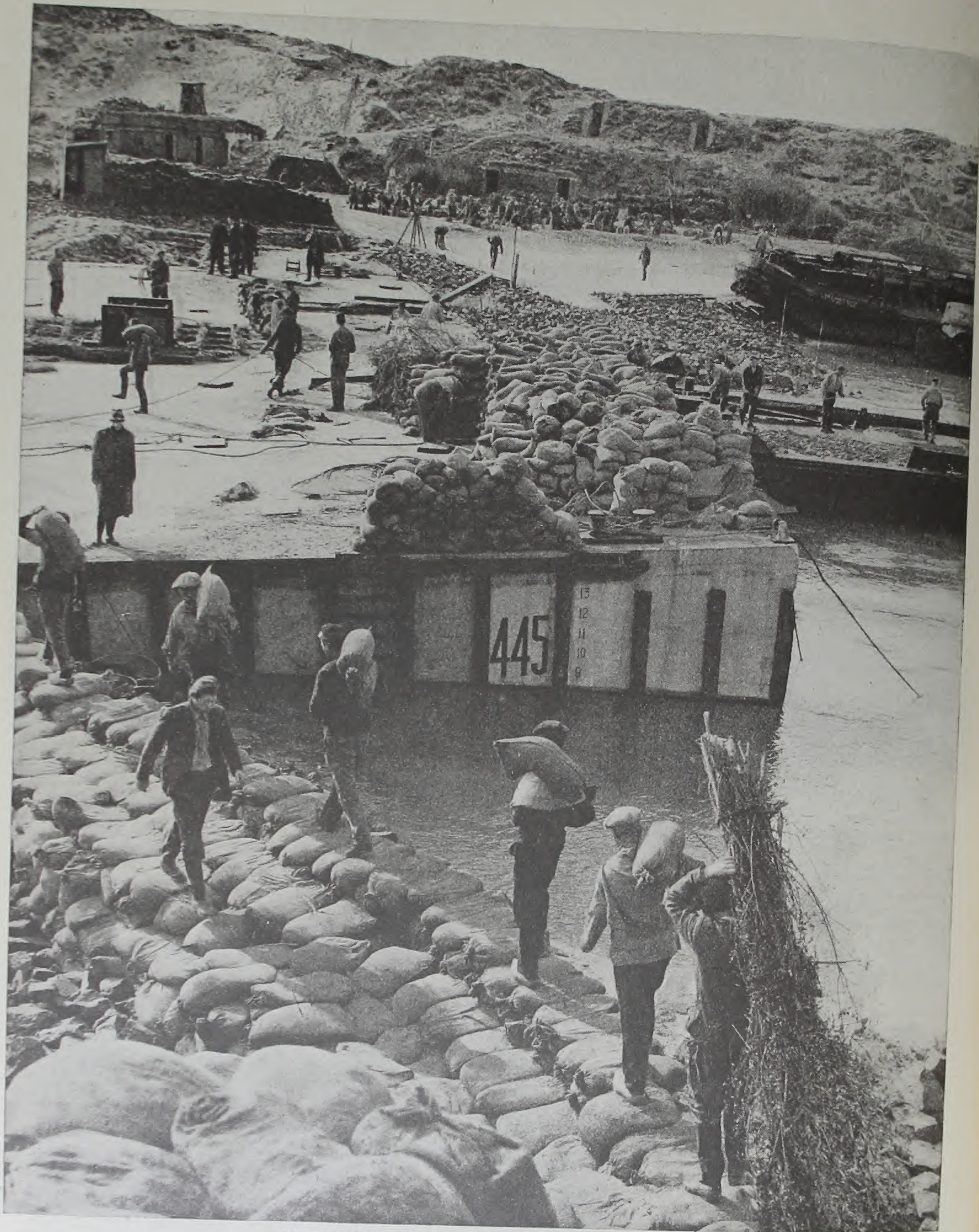
## FRANCE HAILS HER NEW ARMY

On June 18, 1945, France celebrated the rebirth of the French Army. On that same date in the dark hours of 1940, General de Gaulle had broadcast from London (see page 990). Inviting all Frenchmen on British soil to rally to the colours, he had declared 'France is not lost. The same methods which have brought about our defeat can quite well one day bring victory.' Five years later, with Europe freed from Nazidom, fifty thousand troops of the new French Army marched in Paris from the Arc de Triomphe to a saluting base in the Place de la Concorde. Here General de Gaulle, accompanied by Generals Catroux, de Larminat and Leyer, the Army Chiefs of Staff, presented decorations. An armoured and motorized procession was led by General Leclerc, the liberator of Paris (see page 3244). Above, the march-past outside the Hôtel de Ville. Right, General de Gaulle decorates the colours of the Marines.

*Photos, French Official ; New York Times Photos*







### REPAIRING WALCHEREN'S BREACHED DYKES

With the aid of British equipment, including spare Mulberry harbour sections (see Chapter 307) towed from England, Dutch engineers in September 1945 began the colossal task of repairing the dykes at Walcheren blasted by the R.A.F. (see page 3374). Gales considerably hampered progress, breaking open again one repaired dyke, at Nolle, west of Flushing. But by October 3, exactly a year from the R.A.F.'s first attack, the first of the gaps had been sealed. One of the most formidable repair tasks was at Rammekens, where the dykes had been breached by 12,000-lb. bombs. Here, Dutch workmen are at work, carrying sandbags and faggots for the foundations of a new dyke.

*Photo, G.P.U.*



organized Socialist resistance in the "unoccupied" zone of France. He was one of Mr. Léon Blum's defenders at the Riom trials (see page 2182 and illus. in page 2181). Selected by the Socialist Party as its representative on General de Gaulle's Committee of National Liberation in London, he crossed into Spain, where he was interned for three months, but succeeded in reaching Britain in August 1942. He went to Algiers when the Provisional Government was set up there, was elected president of the Consultative Assembly in May 1944, and confirmed in that post after the Assembly's return to Paris (see illus. in page 3412).

Mr. Gouin decided that drastic steps were necessary if the critical financial situation was to be met, and before forming his Cabinet he asked the three strongest parties whether they would accept the rigorous steps he proposed to take. All three parties agreed: the M.R.P. and the Communists made some reservations, but the Socialist party gave its entire adhesion to his plans. Agreement having thus been secured, Mr. Gouin formed a tripartite Government, with Mr. Francisque Gay, of the M.R.P., and Mr. Maurice Thorez, Communist, as vice-premiers.

The Constituent Assembly gave the Government its confidence by 403 votes to 44. It passed a resolution stating that it counted on the Prime Minister "to assure the economic, financial, and moral recovery of the country while respecting Republican institutions and social laws."

France thus entered a new era. After the euphoria of the liberation, after the phase in which it had seemed as if everything was going to be easy, the country renounced illusions and entered the domain of realities.

To turn from political to social and economic life in France in 1945, four of her chief ports were still in enemy hands at the time of the general German surrender. The garrisons of Lorient, St. Nazaire and La Rochelle surrendered on May 9 to U.S. and French forces; Dunkirk on May 11 to the Czechoslovak troops investing it (see illus. in page 3214). Dunkirk was found completely, St. Nazaire nearly completely, destroyed. Destruction elsewhere was immense.

Boulogne, which suffered 417 bombings, had half its houses destroyed; only one-tenth of the remainder were fit for habitation. Cherbourg, badly damaged, had had its port facilities restored, for military use, by American engineers; however, the first Liberty ship bringing goods for civilians (out of a flotilla of 50 released by the U.S. Government for French use) docked there on May 17.

Many Breton and Norman towns were heaps of rubble: St. Malo, which ceased to exist during the eight days' bombardment of the German garrison in August 1944 (see illus. in page 3183), had been

#### War Damage to French Towns

cleared a year later, and preparations for rebuilding had begun. The centre of Dinard was destroyed; one-quarter of the buildings in Le Touquet were wrecked; two-thirds of Wimereux were destroyed. At Rouen, 15,000 houses were destroyed. Blois and Tarascon were very seriously damaged. Complete new plans for Rouen

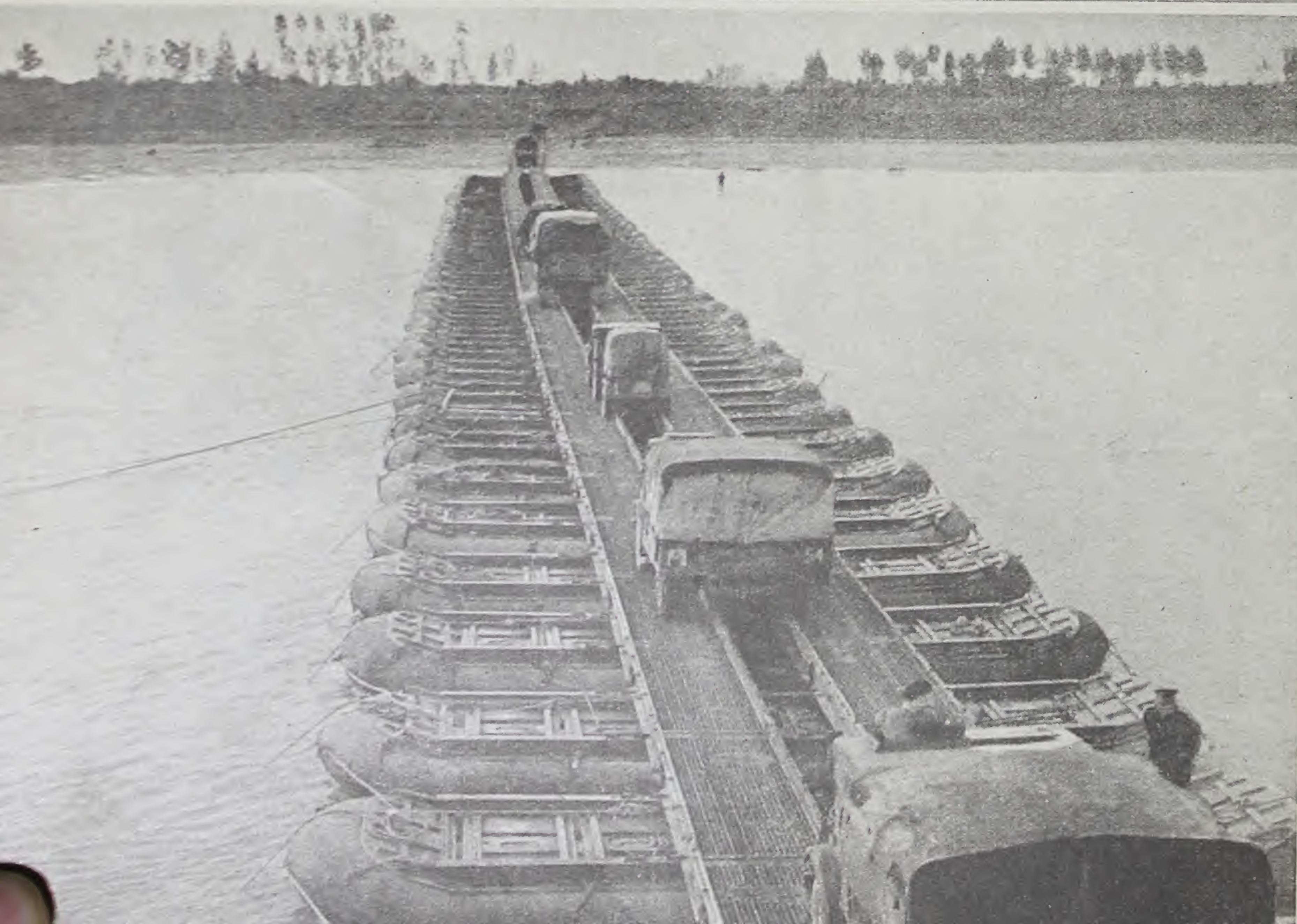
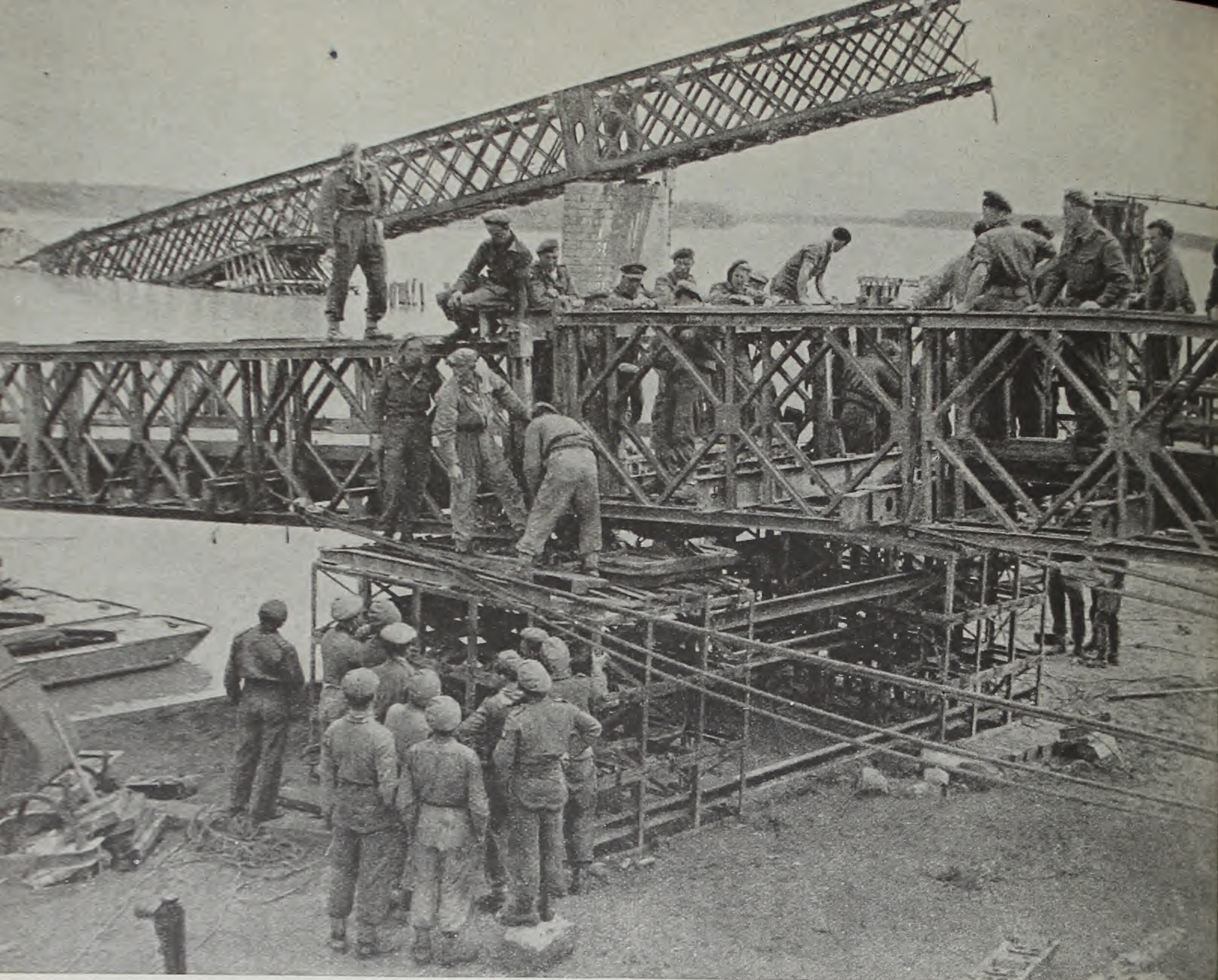
#### CELEBRATION OF V.E. DAY IN PARIS

The French capital celebrated V.E. Day (May 8, 1945) with enthusiasm. Great crowds marched arm-in-arm down the Champs Elysées singing the 'Marseillaise,' loud-speakers in the Place de l'Opéra broadcast patriotic music. At a thanksgiving service in Notre Dame the Lesson was read by Mr. Duff Cooper, the British Ambassador. Below, crowds outside the Opera House listen to General de Gaulle's broadcast announcing the end of the war. Photo, U.S. Official

4 C 1







### ALLIED ARMIES CROSS RIVER PO

With the fall of Bologna on April 21, 1945 (see illus. in page 3717), the German defence system in the Po Valley was shattered. Three days later both the 5th and 8th Armies crossed the river in pursuit of a demoralized enemy. First British troops across were the Grenadier Guards and New Zealand infantry, both with the 8th Army.

Engineers of V Corps (top), including men of the 8th Indian Division, build a Bailey pontoon bridge over the Po north of Ferrara. This structure—1,370 feet long—was the longest floating military bridge in Europe and was opened three days after the initial crossings. In the background is the wrecked railway bridge. Left, vehicles of the South African 6th Armoured Division cross the river on a pontoon bridge constructed by U.S. Army engineers.

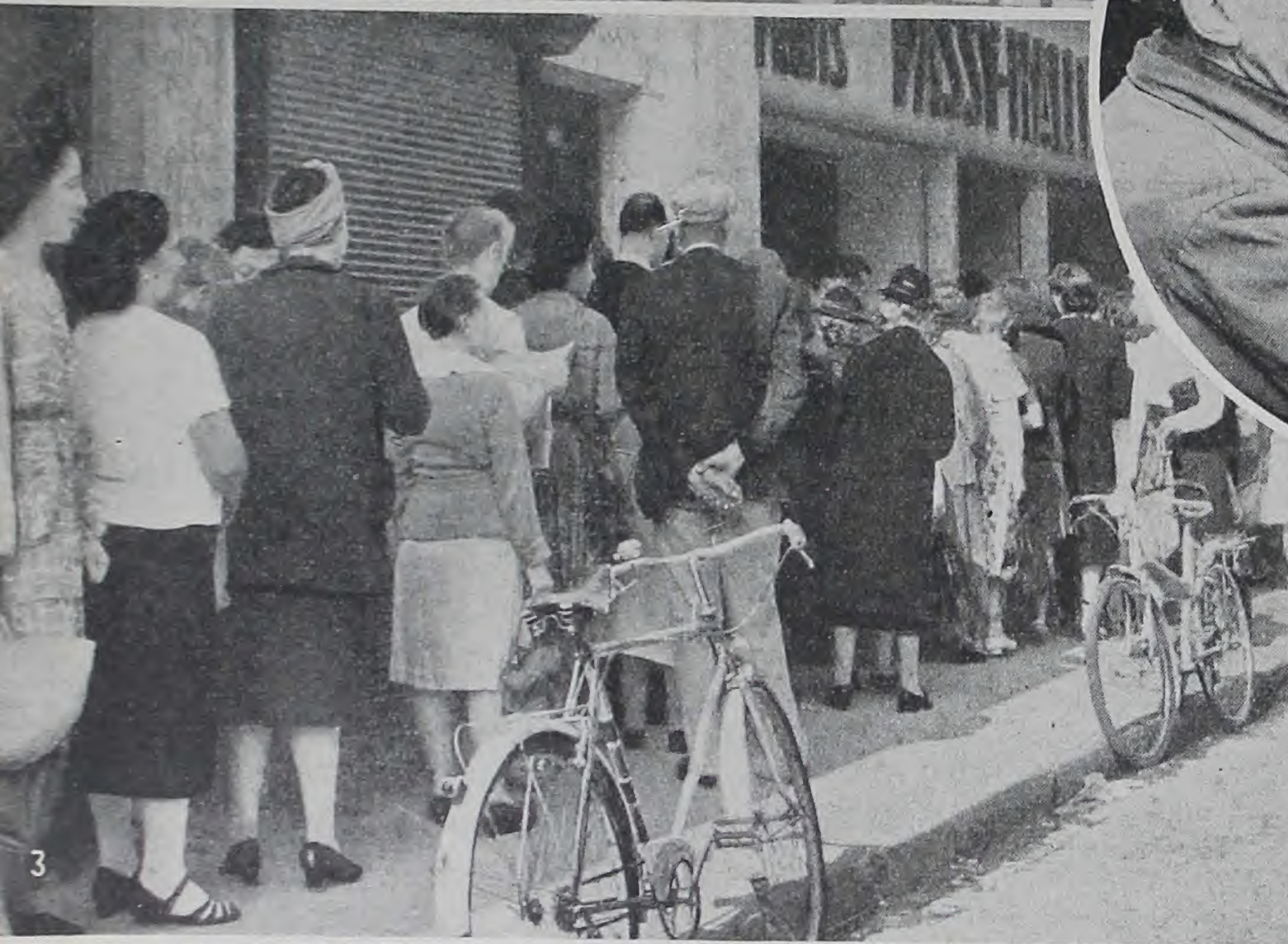
*Photos, British and South African Official*





# FRENCH FOOD SHORTAGE

A bad harvest, caused by the exceptional drought, contributed to the grave food shortage in France during the winter of 1945-46. The wheat harvest was only 43,000,000 quintals compared with 65,000,000 for the previous year. The re-introduction of bread rationing (discontinued on November 1, 1945, and imposed again on December 28) led to strikes in Paris and Lille. 1. Canadian Army lorries help food distribution. 2. French Military Transport Service driver sticks transfer of new insignia on a lorry. 3. Queueing for vegetables in Paris. 4. Parisian baker's assistant puts up a 'Don't Waste Bread!' notice. 5. Angry women in Paris demand more food.



PRIX DE VENTE DU PAIN	
PAIN "BOULOT" de 2 kilos	7.40
PAIN LONG POULE de 700g	7.40
PAIN "BATAVOT" de 100 grammes	3.80
BRIOCHES de 300 grammes	4. »
LONGUES ou GRESSINS de 25 grammes	0.90
PRIX DE VENTE AU DÉTAIL	
Moins de 25 grammes	Depuis de 250 grammes
1.20	1.20
1.50	1.50
1.80	1.80
2.10	2.10
2.40	2.40
2.70	2.70
3.00	3.00
FARINE	
Le kilo	9.30
Le 500g	4.65
Le 250g	2.32
TICKETS	





### TRIAL OF A TRAITOR

Philippe Pétain, 89-year-old ex-Marshal of France and former head of the Vichy collaborationist 'Government,' was brought to trial in Paris on July 23, 1945, on charges of treason. On August 15 he was sentenced to death, the sentence being commuted by General de Gaulle to life imprisonment. Above, Pétain on trial in the Palais de Justice. *Photos, Keystone*

and Abbeville were drawn up during 1945, and reconstruction went forward steadily, if slowly, everywhere. Excessive overcrowding was common in all the badly damaged towns, and in parts of the Norman countryside where every farm had been at least partially wrecked in the fighting. Special stamps at special prices were issued to commemorate some of these losses and to raise funds for rebuilding.

Food and fuel shortage in many parts of the country, but particularly in the towns, and responsible for most of the popular discontent, was to a considerable extent due to the breakdown of communications, itself the result of Allied bombing, sabotage by the Resistance, demolition by the retreating Germans, and, in certain areas, actual fighting. Some 2,000 miles of railway track, 71 out of 130 major depots, 19 out of 31 repair yards, 115 out of 332 major junctions, 24 out of 40 important marshalling yards, and 2,300 railway bridges and viaducts had been destroyed. France's locomotives had been reduced to 3,000

(from 17,800), passenger coaches to 4,300 (from 29,100), trucks to 26,500 (from 457,000). Paris was for some time cut off from the outside world, and of the 24 bridges round Lyons, 22 were down. Canals and lock-gates had also been damaged, and more than 2,000 road bridges were destroyed.

There were stocks of coal at the pit-head, there was ample surplus food in some country districts; but neither food nor coal could be transported. But not all country districts, even, were well supplied with food: the retreating enemy and the fighting destroyed part of the 1944 harvest, and a drought in the summer of 1945 killed all vegetables in south-central France. Moreover, during the occupation, the Germans had deliberately reduced

France's agricultural productive capacity—food grains to 45 per cent of pre-war, milk to 60 per cent, meat 55 per cent, sugar-beet 50 per cent. While food did not flow evenly or adequately to the towns, the country could not procure sufficient fertilizers, fuel, insecticides, manufactured goods.

During the occupation, rations allocated, but not always obtainable, had never exceeded 1,000 to 1,200 calories a day, and for many months after the liberation they were scarcely, if any, better. The death-rate among newborn babies continued to be very high—the mothers were too weak to feed them, and there was little milk available in most areas. Soap, which was so bad that it rotted materials and led to skin diseases, was allotted at the rate of an



### DE GAULLE'S SUCCESSOR AS HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

Mr. Félix Gouin, 61-year-old Marseilles lawyer and Socialist deputy, was chosen as head of the French Government by the French Constituent Assembly in January 1946 to succeed General de Gaulle who had resigned. Gouin had been elected President of the Assembly in May 1944 in Algiers. Above, Mr. Gouin, as President, addresses the Assembly in Paris



# IN NORMANDY, AFTER THE INVASION AND TWO YEARS LATER—



COUTANCES, important road junction on the western sector of the Normandy front (see page 3180), was captured by U.S. tanks and infantry with powerful artillery support on July 28, 1944. The town was found to be heavily damaged, among the ruins being that of the railway viaduct.



MARIGNY, some six miles west of St. Lô (see page 3180), was taken on July 26, 1944, by U.S. tanks smashing through the German defences to the south of the Pèriers-St. Lô road. Although captured with little opposition, it suffered extensively in preliminary Allied bombings.



COUTANCES, administrative centre of the Manche 'département,' which fell to the Americans after two armoured spearheads, moving from Pèriers and Marigny, had joined about a mile from the town, dates from Romano-Celtic times. Though mauled outside, the Gothic cathedral was intact inside.



## -WESTERN FRONT BATTLEFIELDS - CLEARED FOR RECONSTRUCTION



MONTEBOURG, in the Cherbourg peninsula and some dozen miles from Cherbourg itself (see page 3175), was seized by American forces on June 13, 1944; and was lost and not recaptured until June 19 after bitter enemy resistance. Ruins included the 600-year-old church of St. Jacques.



PÉRIERS, important junction between the Sèves and Ay rivers, was taken by U.S. troops on July 27, 1944 (see page 3180), in an action which jeopardized the position of at least seven German divisions in the Cherbourg peninsula. Its ancient church was among its many ruined buildings.



ST. LÔ was captured by the Americans on July 18, 1944 (see page 3179), after eight days' fierce fighting. An important road centre, it was completely in ruins, fire-blackened and shell-shattered. After its capture the Germans continued to shell it from the nearby hills. Photos, *New York Times Photos*





### ALLIED NATIONS CONSIDER REPARATIONS

A conference of eighteen of the nations which had been at war with Germany met in Paris on November 9, 1945, to determine the proportionate allocation of German reparations out of the quota not allotted to Russia and Poland at the Potsdam Conference (see Chapter 380). The Conference, which met in the Luxembourg Palace (above), announced on December 21 its decision to establish an Inter-Allied Reparation Agency.

*Photo, Keystone*

ounce or two a month. In these circumstances, the black market (i.e. the clandestine sale of rationed goods) continued to flourish: profiteers on a large scale were involved in it, but many little men who cycled into the country to collect food, some for their own use, some to sell, also kept it going.

Direct war damage was estimated at £23,480,000,000 in value—42½ per cent of France's total pre-war assets.

**War Damage in France** This figure did not include the cost of occupation (£4,279,000,000), the value of forced deliveries and services (£2,020,000,000), damage to communications other than direct war damage (£2,245,000,000), or destruction of industrial and commercial establishments apart from direct war damage (£210,000,000). France's human losses, military and civilian, were 650,000 killed, with the loss of another 600,000 through excessive mortality and deficiency from normal in births. Men killed in the armed forces left 70,000 orphans; victims of Nazi reprisals left at least twice as many more. Forty per cent of the conscripts called up in 1945 were rejected, three-quarters of them because they were under weight. French industry had been reduced to 30 per cent of its pre-war capacity. The Minister

of Reconstruction on August 4 estimated that reconstruction would take fifteen years.

Repatriation of prisoners and forced workers from Germany was rapid: 1,365,394 had returned by June 8. Edouard Herriot, released by the Russians in the battle for Berlin, reached Paris on May 21. During the first week of May, Léon Jouhaux (Secretary-General of the C.G.T.), Edouard Daladier (Premier at the outbreak of war) and Paul Reynaud (his successor), Léon Blum (the Socialist leader and former Premier), and Generals Gamelin and Weygand were among the prisoners released. Paul Colette, who fired at and gravely wounded Laval in August 1941 (see page 2016 and illus. in page 2014), was freed from Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria.

Warrants were already out for the arrest of all former Vichy Ministers and other alleged traitors and collaborators. Weygand was arrested on his return to France. The French 1st Army arrested Fernand de Brinon (see page 3405) on May 11. Marshal Pétain gave himself up on April 26. Pierre Laval, already condemned to death in his absence (see illus. in page 3411), flew to Spain, where he was interned, and then to Austria, where he arrived on July 31 in the American zone, to

be immediately arrested and handed over to the French. Joseph Darnand, Secretary of the Interior at Vichy (see page 3405) was arrested on June 28 by Allied troops on the Italo-Swiss frontier.

By July 31, the special courts—one in each department of France—set up to deal exclusively with treason trials had passed 1,629 death sentences; 757 sentences of hard labour for life; 5,328 of hard labour for various terms; 1,136 of solitary confinement; 11,073 of imprisonment; 22,137 of national disgrace (see page 3410). Acquittals numbered 3,564; 25,000 were still awaiting judgement.

These trials were held under the law as it existed before Vichy. The only change was in procedure, made to speed up the hearings. Admiral Esteva (64), former Resident General in Tunisia, was sentenced on March 15 to life imprisonment, loss of civic rights, and the confiscation of his property. General Dentz (64), former C.-in-C. in Syria (see Chapter 175), was sentenced on April 20 to death and deprived of his military rank: a sentence later commuted by General de Gaulle to life imprisonment without hard labour. Darnand, sentenced to death on October 3, was shot a week later. Sentence of death passed on Pétain on August 15 was commuted two days later to life imprisonment. Laval, sentenced to death on October 9, was executed six days later, after a vain attempt to poison himself.



# BEHIND THE ENEMY LINES IN ITALY

*Chapters 319 and 374 tell the history, from the armistice to the end of the war in Europe, of the increasing part of Italy occupied by the advancing Allies. This chapter describes events in northern Italy, which experienced the full tyranny of occupation by Germany after Italy's change of side in October 1943. Its author is Friedl Orlando, who was on the staff of the Allied Command in Italy working in connexion with partisan activity*

**T**HE announcement on September 8, 1943, of the armistice of September 3 between Italy and the Allies (see pages 2865 and 2866 and illus. in page 2865) produced an immediate aggressive reaction among the Germans, which meant that the men of the Italian army could either fight their late ally, or let themselves be disarmed and deported as prisoners of war and slave labour into Germany.

The royal family and the Italian High Command had fled into the safety of some unknown Allied camp; orders came in from nowhere and from everywhere; surrounded by well-prepared German troops in the homeland as well as in the Balkans, left without air support, means of transport or petrol, few commanders had the stamina to confront the situation and fight the German aggressors. There were exceptions; but, on the whole, army and air force leaders were puzzled and uncertain.

Not so their men. Some army groups disbanded immediately, every man trying for himself to escape the Germans; others fought to keep their arms and,

## Italian Soldiers Disband

when the Germans had suffered a temporary setback, disbanded and fled. In the Balkans

thousands joined the Yugoslav and also the Greek partisans; one group of 40,000 (later the famous "Garibaldi Division") put themselves en bloc under Tito's orders. The troops in central Italy made towards the Allied lines. But in general the men took the route towards "home": each man trekked towards the valley of which he knew the hideouts; each man towards the township where he would be able to tell friend from spy; each man towards the house where his family would bar the door, if the Germans should come and look for him. Some may even have thought of reorganizing armed resistance; but the foremost thought in every soldier's mind at that moment was safety for his person and for his weapons, so that, whatever might come, neither he nor the nation should be delivered helpless to the fury of German revenge.

But in central and northern Italy, the soldier soon found that even at home there was no safety. North of the

Allied lines, a Republican Fascist administration had been set up by Mussolini after his rescue from his Apennine prison (see page 3233). The Fascist authorities, holding power through Hitler's grace, were only too eager to supply Germany with slave labour and auxiliary fighting forces. In their hands were the communal



## DUCE'S LAST 'GOVERNMENT'

On his release by S.S. troops, Mussolini on September 15, 1943, broadcast a 'proclamation' reconstituting the Fascist Party and government on a republican basis with himself as Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Marshal Graziani—C.-in-C., Libya, till his defeat by General Wavell in 1941 (see Chapter 131)—as Minister of Defence. Here Mussolini, grown much thinner, talks with Graziani.

registers, the army records, the ration cards; they could control the country far better than the foreigners could ever have done, and they were able to keep a watch on every individual. The disbanded soldiers had only one refuge: the mountains. Here they were joined by Allied prisoners, whose camps had been opened on September 8 in accordance with the armistice terms, and who were now hunted by the German-Fascist authorities.

After the Nazi-Fascists regained control of the greater part of the country, the local Committees of National Liberation went underground again. These

political organizations, representing the six anti-Fascist parties (see page 3234) in all provinces, towns, and often villages and factories, developed clandestinely during the time of the Italo-German alliance. When, largely thanks to their activities, Mussolini fell, they came into the open and brought pressure to bear on Badoglio for the speedy conclusion of an armistice with the Allies. When the Germans occupied the country the Nazi-Fascists immediately seized the C.N.L. leaders. Many were shot; the luckier ones escaped to join the irregulars in the mountains. Through them, the guerilla bands received their first political colouring and education.

Meanwhile in the provinces, towns and villages the Committees of Liberation carried on secretly under new leadership, unknown to Germans and Fascists. As the fighting units grew larger, the question came up: how could the political C.N.L. collaborate with the irregular fighting units to the best advantage of the nation? Parties proved to be divided; but eventually the point of view of the Communists and Actionists won, and it was established that partisan bands should come under the authority of their local C.N.L., and that, in fact, the partisan movement should be developed so as to become the fighting corollary of the political resistance movement. Adoption of the political programme of the C.N.L.—a programme of national unity, embracing all anti-Fascist opinion from liberal to communist—was demanded from the partisans. All the more important Committees formed a military sub-committee to which the partisan commanders, operating in the particular zone, were responsible. These military sub-committees also co-ordinated the work of the partisans with that of the Groups and Squads of Patriotic Action. These groups were composed of citizens of inhabited places, in great part women, who kept liaison with the partisans, carrying messages to and from

## Local Liberation Committees





### PARTISANS HELPED TO FREE FLORENCE

Important part in the liberation of northern Italy was played by the Italian partisans whose forces eventually numbered 170,000. In May 1944 all Italian partisans were unified in the Corps of the Volunteers for Liberty (Corpo Volontari della Libertà). When the 8th Army entered Florence on August 12, 1944, it was to find the partisans—some of whom are seen above—in control.

*Photo, British Official*

as near as possible to towns and villages, at great risk to themselves and to the local population. But reprisals grew fiercer—there are tens of Lidices in

#### Lidices of North Italy

northern Italy. Enough to mention such names as Vado, on the Prato-Bologna road, where 1,400 people were massacred, or S. Pancrazio di Bucine near Arezzo, which was razed to the ground, or Vinca, where, after the male population had fled, a mixed force of German and Fascist S.S. hanged 172 women and children.

The assistance and sympathy of the population was essential to the partisans—their supplies depended on it. The patriots had some funds, raised partly by collections organized by the C.N.L. and partly by attacks made on Fascist offices. Some industrialists also found it worth while to make donations.

Nazi-Fascist propaganda did its best to estrange the population from the partisans. Having failed to set them against each other on political grounds, they described the partisans as bandits and highwaymen. But the patriots enforced a Spartan discipline in their ranks, as the following document shows:

“April 5, 1945.

“The Zone Command (of Liguria) has tried Partisan Dino, vice-commander of the Cichero Division, and has found him guilty of serious crimes, amounting to theft and undue appropriation. He has been sentenced to death. The sentence has been carried out.”

When military operations grew more ambitious, entire regions fell to the partisans. In these areas, Fascists were immediately deprived of their

office and free elections for local council, from candidates representing parties and trades, were held. During the elections the partisans acted as a kind of technical instructors. They also provided the police force and, in collaboration with the newly elected local authority, usually organized the collection of wheat and of taxes. A good deal became known about partisan administration when, in summer 1944, the Val

d'Ossola (west of Lake Maggiore) was occupied after heavy fighting by the partisans.

Political divisions played a very small part in the patriot movement. All formations accepted simply the programme of national unity of the Committee of Liberation. The particular political colour of a unit derived, in most cases, from loyalty to its leader, but the adherence of a partisan to one or another force was conditioned far more by geographical than by political considerations; a man joining the force operating in his area did not have to swallow the political creed of his commander. Discussion was free and was encouraged. The Communist brigades had political commissars (as well as priests) who had the task of instilling the sense of the purpose of his fight into

every man. For most of these young men, the discussions in their mountain hideouts were their first contact with free political thought, and it was only natural, therefore, that many of them fell under the influence of their commander or political commissar and developed strong sympathies for his way of thought.

In May 1944 all partisan forces were unified in one body called Corpo Volontari della Libertà (Corps of the Volunteers for Liberty) and were put under the orders of a clandestine

#### Volunteers for Liberty

General Staff for northern Italy, which, in its turn, worked hand in hand with the central Committee of National Liberation. An able army officer, General Raffaele Cadorna, son of the Italian C-in-C. during the early part of the First Great War, was dispatched north to act as Commander-in-Chief. The vice-commanders were two political figures, chosen from the two parties who were most active in the resistance movement: the Communist Luigi Longo, who, as Gallo, had been political commissar of the Italian Garibaldi Brigade, and had been one of the outstanding figures in the Spanish civil war; and Ferruccio Parri, of the Action Party, who when the north was liberated, became Prime Minister from June to November 1945 of a new all-party government (see Chapter 374)—an indication of the solidarity of all Italy with the partisan movement.

### HITLER'S JACKAL

Heavily protected by a guard of his German masters, Benito Mussolini, ex-Duce and head of the fast-crumbling Italian 'Fascist Republic' (right), addresses Italian Fascist troops in Milan in January on their way to fight for the Nazis. Behind him stands Pavelini, secretary of the Republican Fascist Party.

*Photo, Planet News*







### ENEMY WAR INDUSTRY GOES UNDERGROUND

Increasing Allied air attacks on war-production centres in Italy drove the country's German masters to shelter them underground. Here is a section of the well-known Alfa-Romeo plant removed from Milan to the caves at Costozza, near Vicenza. The caves, covering some ten acres, were equipped with air-conditioning apparatus and power, and over a thousand people were employed there making aero-engines.

*Photo, British Official*

the mountain hideouts, taking up food, clothing and ammunition, reporting German movements and, in the proximity of the Allied lines, doing intelligence work for the Allies. The squads were small, armed detachments of town and village dwellers who attacked Nazi-Fascist administrative offices, executed collaborators and high-ranking Fascists, destroyed records and files—in short, had the task of hampering the Fascist administrative machinery.

With the help of the C.N.L., enrolment of partisans became better organized. As far as possible their number was restricted to the amount of weapons

#### Enrolment of Partisans

available in an area, i.e. two men were admitted for every one firearm. But while at

the outset the partisans could supplement their stocks of arms and ammunition only through attacks on German and Fascist stores, the C.N.L. had further means of supply: they organized secret weapon collections and later arranged for Allied supplies to be dropped from the air. They also vetted new recruits for the partisan forces as to their political loyalty.

But it was never possible to regulate completely the intake of partisans. For one thing, there were the many deserters from the Fascist and German armies. Such desertions, especially of foreign soldiers of the German army, were daily occurrences. Some partisan divisions included Russian, French or Polish

units. There were also cases of desertion by German nationals. Though these deserters mostly brought over their arms, they nevertheless presented a special problem: it was difficult to distinguish them from enemy *agents-provocateurs*, and many a unit suffered a heavy surprise attack after some false sympathizer had found his way into it.



### GERMANS FEEL MANPOWER SHORTAGE IN ITALY

After the Italian surrender in September 1943, the Germans in Italy were faced with a crisis in their manpower resources. Their demands for Italian labour became so great that Marshal Graziani, Defence Minister in Mussolini's Republican Fascist 'Government,' in April 1944 had to implore the Nazis to cut down these demands. Here Italian workmen help to erect coastal defences for the Nazis on the Adriatic.

*Photo, New York Times Photos*

Many of those who worked underground in towns and villages, members of the Squads or Groups of Patriotic Action, came gradually under suspicion and had to flee to the mountains. At the beginning of March 1944 the C.N.L. of northern Italy organized a general strike, lasting several days; its aim was to paralyse Nazi-Fascist war production, and to test the political unity of the country and of the resistance movement. The whole of northern Italy was paralysed by the strike, the biggest ever organized in Europe under Nazi domination. But as a result new people were compromised and had to take to armed resistance. In the end the actual partisan forces numbered 170,000, including women. In areas where sufficient arms were available women participated in the fighting, but in most sections they acted as nurses, cooks, dispatch riders. Only two women commanders are on record: one was a Communist countess, known as "Angela," who commanded a formation in the Turin area; the other, Norma Barbolini, while her brother, commander of the "Modena" division, was recovering from wounds, took over his command of approximately 4,000 men.

As the organization of the patriot forces proceeded, as their numbers grew and supplies were somewhat regularized, they were forced to move ever farther from inhabited centres. For reasons of supply they had, at first, kept

#### Total Strength of Resisters





### ITALY'S PATRIOTS CLEARED MILAN

On May 1, 1945, General Mark Clark, C.-in-C., Allied Armies in Italy, sent special congratulations to the Italian partisans who had liberated the important cities of Milan and Turin before the arrival of the Allied forces. Milan had been entered by U.S. troops of the 5th Army two days previously. Above, partisan light machine-gunners mopping up in Milan as the Germans withdraw

*Photo, Evening Standard*

What had been scattered bands, bent first and foremost on their own defence, became an active, disciplined fighting body with special strategic functions. These functions were strictly conditioned by the limitations of a partisan force—lack of heavy arms, air support and mechanized transport—and by their particular assets—profound knowledge of the country and superior morale.

In the long peninsula of Italy, with its few lines of communication, sabotage of transport had the most serious consequences for the enemy. The patriots

blew up trains and tunnels and more than once obstructed the Alpine Passes Brenner Pass, a supply line more than ever vital to the Germans after the liberation of the south of France. Earlier the Simplon Pass was repeatedly obstructed, and on one occasion was damaged so severely that for at least two weeks no German supplies could come through it.

Owing to the hit-and-run tactics of partisan warfare, no overall strategic plan can be described on geographical lines. The various tasks depend entirely on the position of the front line and on the situation in the enemy's rear. The first communiqué on Italian partisan activity behind the lines in northern Italy was issued from General Alexander's headquarters on May 22, 1944 (see illus. in page 3241). Thereafter

communiqués and instructions were issued daily. Here are two taken at random:

June 11, 1944 [the Allied armies were approaching Perugia and Siena] "... The Germans are retreating. They are using main roads like the Orvieto-Siena-Poggibonsi-Florence road and the Terni-Spoleto-Foligno-Perugia-

### GRAZIANI IS CAPTURED

Marshal Graziani, Fascist Italy's last commander-in-chief, was detained by Italian patriots at Lecco, Lake Como, on April 27, 1945, as he tried to escape into Switzerland. His trial as a war criminal was later fixed to begin on June 16, 1946. As Italian Governor of Libya, he earned from the Arabs the nickname of 'Butcher.' Here he greets a German S.S. general, also a prisoner, before being handed over to U.S. military authorities. *Photo, Pictorial Press*



Arezzo-Florence road. The time has come for you to strike and strike hard. Do everything possible to impede the enemy's retreat."

July 3, 1944 [directed to the forces in the Spezia zone]. "It is the duty of all patriots in this zone to do everything in their power to hinder the completion of the German defences and to destroy as much as they can of the defences already completed. . . . Destroy all you can, carry their tools away and make them useless. . . . The leaders of patriot groups in this zone must detail at least two men to note down exact information on the German defences in their area and to make them on as large scale maps as possible. . . . The patriot leaders must make sure that the men who gather all this information cross the lines and reach us."

**Partisan Orders**

More detailed instructions were sent in code by wireless. There was scepticism on the Allied side for some months, but, when the partisans had proved their worth special Allied liaison officers were dispatched to all the more important partisan commands. Supplies were dropped and, whenever possible, air support was given. Many captured documents testify to the great embarrassment caused to the enemy by the partisans and to the drain their numerous activities constituted on Nazi-Fascist man power. Thus a letter, dated





### THE END OF BENITO MUSSOLINI, DUCE OF ITALY

The former Duce of Fascist Italy was captured by Italian partisans on April 28, 1945, at Dongo, Lake Como, while attempting to escape into Switzerland. He was accompanied by Clara Petacci, his 25-year-old mistress, and several members of the 'Republican-Fascist' Government. Mussolini and all the members of the party were summarily executed by partisans in the nearby village of Giuliano di Mezzegere. The bodies were brought to Milan in a lorry and exhibited publicly the next day in the Piazza Loreto. 1. The bodies of Mussolini and Clara Petacci. 2. One of many busts of the ex-Fascist leader torn from their niches in Milan. 3. The ex-Duce and his mistress hang head downwards in the Piazza Loreto. 4. Poster pasted up in Milan by a partisan announces Italy's liberation.







### CONFUSION IN TRIESTE

New Zealanders, under Lieut.-General Sir Bernard Freyberg, V.C., occupied Trieste on May 3, 1945. They found a confused situation, for Marshal Tito's forces had entered the city four days previously, while 'Chetnik' bands, formerly under Mihailovich, and Italian guerillas were also active. Above, at Monfalcone, near Trieste, youthful patriots greet their liberators.  
*Photo, British Official*

April 2, 1944, from Marshal Graziani, commander of the Republican Fascist army, to Marshal Kesselring, implored him to cut down German requests for Fascist labour and for Fascist soldiers. The following lines are significant: "One of my most urgent problems is to increase as much as possible the number of formations engaged in fighting the rebels; this fight is a necessary and quite indispensable preliminary to the re-establishment of the authority and prestige of the state."

From figures relating to the actions of the Pinero Cichero partisan division, for instance, it appears that in the period

#### Partisan Gains and Losses

between June 1944 and April 27, 1945, every partisan killed or put out of action three of the enemy. In the same period this division, operating in Liguria and 1,178 strong, fought 359 actions, carried out 157 acts of sabotage and took 2,893 prisoners. Their own losses were 82 dead, 11 missing, 234 wounded.

Large scale attacks by German and Fascist forces were frequent. Often they succeeded in disbanding entire divisions, but always at very great cost to themselves. Winter was particularly unfavourable to the partisans; the Germans needed fewer men to hold the front line, while cold and hunger often compelled partisan units to descend nearer to the valleys. Moreover, they

could no longer rely on one of their main assets for attack, surprise, for there was no foliage to cover them and snow betrayed their movements. In the winters of 1943-44 and 1944-45 the Germans organized big drives to wipe out the resisters.

While numerous small fighting actions were continuously and everywhere in progress, the partisan command avoided big battles as far as possible; for in large scale operations the superior equipment of the Nazi-Fascist forces counted too heavily. The battle of Montefiorino is probably the biggest (apart from the final battles for the liberation of northern towns), which Italian partisans ever fought. After the corps of "Armando," numbering about 6,000 men had occupied the Radice Pass, important for the German retreat from central Italy, the Germans, in an attempt to dislocate them, attacked with 25,000 men. "Armando's" men fought for several days until their ammunition gave out; then they dispersed, only to re-form their ranks later on. Through the indiscretion of a Fascist colonel, it became known that in the battle the German-Fascist forces lost 2,080 men killed and 1,200 wounded.

On August 4, 1944, the Allies entered the southern outskirts of Florence (see page 3472). But the Germans had blown up all bridges across the Arno, except the Ponte Vecchio, and had firmly installed themselves in the northern part of the city. Patriot forces fought against them for a week, until, on the 11th, the Germans drew out and the Allies crossed the river on the 12th.

After the Canadians took Ravenna on December 4, Lieutenant-General McCreery, commander of the 8th Army, conferred the gold medal. Italy's highest military award, on the local partisan leader, Boldrini, for organizing the

### RAVENNA IS FREED

British troops of the 8th Army on December 4, 1944, captured the ancient town of Ravenna, once capital of the Western Roman Empire. Isolated units of the Wehrmacht left behind were skilfully mopped up by Italian partisans as the British troops pushed forward to cut the Ravenna-Ferrara highway. Right, partisans being thanked by their leaders after the city's liberation.  
*Photo, British Official*

partisan movement in the province and liberating the town. As Italy was not an ally, no British or American award could be given to him; but General McCreery asked the Italian General Staff that he himself should be allowed to convey the gold medal to Boldrini.

In April 1945, the Allies attacked across the Senio river, to liberate Bologna on the 21st (see Chapter 361). This was the signal for which the Corpo Volontari had been waiting.

Pushed from the south, fighting with their backs towards the Alps, the German position was, indeed, precarious. Yet there was the Brenner Pass, which, in spite of repeated damage by bombing and sabotage, still offered some hope of a partial retreat. There was the sea. And there were the Apennines and the southern slopes of the Alps, where the Germans might have dispersed and, adopting partisan technique, could have put up a prolonged defence, forcing the Allies to carry out extremely difficult mopping-up operations. It was for the Italian partisans to hinder the Germans from escape or dispersal.

They also knew that the speed with which the north was liberated was the all-important thing for Italy's future. A slow and piecemeal retreat on the part of the Germans would have meant Italy's ruin for very many years to come. The Germans were known to have planned scorched-earth measures in all details: for weeks, demolition experts had been visiting industrial establishments, mines had been laid, stores of dynamite had been piled up.

On April 24 the Allies entered Ferrara, Modena and Spezia. That day Genoa rose.







### MILAN HONOURS ITS DEAD LIBERATORS

On April 25, 1946, Milan celebrated the first anniversary of its liberation by the partisans. Above, left, General Raffaele Cadorna, former leader of the partisans in northern Italy and later appointed Chief of Staff of the Italian Army, decorates the mother of a partisan hero killed in action. Right, Ferruccio Parri, partisan leader and Italian Premier from June–November 1945, addresses a celebration meeting.

*Photos New York Times Photos*

The partisans marched on the town, blocking the three roads of retreat from Liguria, leading to Parma, Piacenza and Milan. Counting roughly a thousand armed men, the partisans were met in Genoa's outskirts by 3,000 German and Fascist troops. Fighting developed. Inside the town, the population, led by the Groups and Squads of Patriotic Action, rose. The Nazi-Fascists found themselves between two fires. On the evening of the 25th, General Reinhold, commander of the German forces in Liguria, signed his surrender. All he asked for was that his troops should be disarmed during the dark hours.

Genoa had given the signal. By April 25 the whole north had risen. While the Allies advanced towards Verona and Piacenza, there was hard fighting in Milan and Turin. By the 27th these two important towns were in the hands of the Corps of Volunteers.

Mussolini was caught while trying to escape to Switzerland and executed immediately. The Republican Fascists

refused to believe in his death, and with the fanaticism of despair carried on the fight in the streets of Milan. To convince them that their cause was lost, the Committee of Liberation had his body hung up in a Milan square.

Of all German troops, those stationed in Venezia Giulia and Trieste had probably the best chance of escape. Synchronizing their action with that of the Central Committee of Liberation,

Trieste resistance leaders ordered a rising. After a day or so of fighting, the Germans offered to cease fire, under the condition that they should be handed over to General Freyberg's troops. To avoid unnecessary bloodshed, the Committee of Liberation accepted this condition; they rounded up the Germans, but allowed them to keep their arms until they were able to surrender to the 8th Army. On the morning of the 30th, when the 8th Army was still in the process of occupying Venice, Yugoslav vanguards entered Trieste. They were met by German fire. From this fact derived a whole series of suspicions, accusations and counter-accusations between Italian resistance leaders and followers of Marshal Tito.

Suspicion also cast a shadow on subsequent relations between the Allies and the Italian partisans. Wherever the Allies entered, they declared the Committees of Liberation, which had taken over administration in the towns freed by the Corps of Volunteers, to be merely consultative bodies and established military government instead. The partisan forces were immediately dissolved, individual patriots were disarmed in the street, paid off with the miserable sum the Italian Government could afford, and sent back to their homes that often no longer

existed. True enough, the problem confronting the Allies—the number of these men, the general economic condition of the country and the sudden end of the war—was unprecedented; but the suspicious manner and, above all, the hurry with which the Allies acted, could not fail to cause resentment in these somewhat overstrained men.

On May 2, the German surrender, signed at Caserta on April 29, was published and came into force. Thus the whole of northern Italy had been liberated in one week through the collaboration between regular and partisan armies.

#### German Surrender in Italy

The casualties in the ranks of the Corps of Volunteers had been heavy: out of 170,000 men 26,000 were dead and 20,000 missing. As the Nazi-Fascists never recognized the military status of the Corps, a man classed as "missing" could be assumed to be dead. On this assumption the patriots lost one quarter of their men. 23,000 were seriously wounded.

But their fight was not in vain. Not only did the resistance movement speed up and help to achieve victory, not only did the partisans limit the destruction of the country's economic assets for the future, but they also laid the moral foundation on which alone a new Italy could rise.



## GERMAN SURRENDER IN ITALY

The first large-scale surrender made by the Germans was of the land, sea, and air forces in northern Italy, the Austrian provinces of Vorarlberg, Tirol, and Salzburg, and parts of Carinthia and Styria to Field-Marshal Alexander on April 29, 1945. Here are the terms imposed, and Mr. Churchill's announcement of them three days later

**The terms of surrender imposed on April 29, 1945, at Caserta on the German land, sea, and air forces in Italy:**

First, unconditional surrender by the German commander-in-chief, south-west, of all forces under his command or control on land, sea, or air to the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean theatre of operations.

Secondly, the cessation of all hostilities on land, on sea, or in the air by enemy forces at 12.00 hours G.M.T., May 2 1945.

Thirdly, the immediate immobilization and disarmament of enemy ground, sea, and air forces.

Fourthly, an obligation on the part of the German commander-in-chief, south-west, to carry out any further orders issued by the supreme allied command, Mediterranean theatre.

Fifthly, disobedience of orders or failure to comply with them will be dealt with in accordance with the accepted laws and usages of war.

The instrument of surrender stipulates that it is independent of, without prejudice to, and will be superseded by any general instrument of surrender imposed by or on behalf of the United Nations and applicable to Germany and the German armed forces as a whole.

The instrument of surrender and appendices is written in English and German. The English version is the authentic text.

The decision of the Supreme Allied Command, Mediterranean theatre, will be final if any doubt or dispute arises as to the meaning or interpretation of the surrender terms.

The signing took place in the office of General Morgan in the presence of British, United States, and U.S.S.R. officers, including Lieutenant-General Robertson, Chief Administrative Officer, Allied Force Headquarters; Major-General Lemnitzer, Deputy Chief of Staff; Rear-Admiral H. A. Packer, Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean; Rear-Admiral S. S. Lewis, Chief of Staff to the Commander United States Naval Forces in North African Waters; Major-General Chauncey, Chief of Staff to Mediterranean Allied Air Forces; Air Vice-Marshal G. B. A. Baker, Chief of Staff to the Deputy Air Commander-in-Chief; and many other senior allied staff officers.

**Mr. Churchill informs the House of Commons on Wednesday, May 2, 1945, of the German surrender in Italy:**

**I** PROMISED that I would come to the House if anything of major importance occurred, and I would ask your leave, Mr. Speaker, and the indulgence of the House, to make a short statement. There has been a certain amount of matter issued continuously from tape machines, and I thought perhaps the House would like to hear a short account which I have received from Field-Marshal Sir Harold Alexander.

Field-Marshal Alexander, the Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean theatre of operations, has just announced that the land, sea, and air forces commanded by Colonel-General Heinrich von Vietinghoff-Scheel, German Commander-in-Chief, South-West Command, and Commander-in-Chief of the army group "C," have surrendered unconditionally. The instrument of surrender was signed on Sunday afternoon, April 29, at the Allied Forces Headquarters at Caserta, by two German plenipotentiaries and by Lieutenant-General W. D. Morgan, Chief of Staff at Allied Forces Headquarters. The terms of surrender provided for the cessation of hostilities at 12 o'clock noon, G.M.T., on Wednesday, May 2, that is to say 2 o'clock today by our time.

But as all these matters are accompanied by many elements of uncertainty, it was not until effective confirmation was obtained by the actual orders issued to the troops from the German High Command that Field-Marshal Alexander issued the statement which has now come over the wireless.

The territory under General von Vietinghoff-Scheel, South-West Command, includes northern Italy to the Isonzo

river in the north-east, and the Austrian provinces of Vorarlberg, Tirol, and Salzburg, and portions of Carinthia and Styria. It is therefore, geographically, a surrender which puts us into very close touch with the position of the United States armies of the north.

The fighting troops of the enemy include the remnants of 22 German divisions and six Italian Fascist divisions, but with the combat and echelon troops upon the lines of communication and throughout this territory, which they have held for so long, the total numbers who have surrendered to the allies are estimated to amount to nearly 1,000,000 men.

Not only has a vast area of territory, vital in its character, fallen into the hands of the Supreme Commander, Sir Harold Alexander, but the actual surrender which has taken place so far, comprising the numbers it does, constitutes, I believe, a record for the whole of this war—and cannot fail but to be helpful to the further events for which we are looking.

This army in Italy, American and British composed, commanded by our trusted General and having under him General Mark Clark, a most efficient and daring American soldier, has had a marvellous record since they first landed in the peninsula . . .

What has made it particularly difficult and depressing for this army is the tremendous inroads which have been made upon it in order to help forward other great operations. In June and July of last year what very nearly amounted to an army was taken from this Command in Italy, while only a very small corresponding reduction took place on the enemy's side. Now quite recently, a few months ago, feeling that it would probably be beyond the strength of this army, so weakened, to make a decisive attack, we moved another large addition of divisions to the western front, and some others went to Greece.

Thus this army was an army stripped of its strength and facing an enemy force which for all the purposes of war must have been considered far stronger because it had the duty of defending mountain ranges and, afterwards, plains flooded by autumn and winter rains, and which certainly in the number of divisions, exceeded those which were left to attack. Moreover those forces left to attack, as I pointed out in my message of congratulation to Field-Marshal Alexander, were of so many different nations that only some personality of commanding qualities could have held them all and woven them all together.

If you look over the whole list of those men who have fought, you will find, taking as we may our own contribution first—it was the largest—the British and British Indian divisions of the highest quality. In addition to the British divisions we had the Poles—who have always fought with the greatest loyalty; the New Zealanders—who have marched all the way from the beginning right up to the very spearpoint of the advance; the South African Armoured Division—who were very forward in the fray; the great forces of the United States—second in numbers only to our own. Then there have been the Brazilian forces, which have made their steady advances; a negro division of United States troops, which has also distinguished itself: the Jewish Brigade, which we formed a year or so ago, and which has fought in the front line with courage; and finally the Japanese of American birth, who entered Turin. Finally, there were the free Italians—who have played their part in clearing their country from the German Fascist yoke. All these forces, weakened as they had been, were not discouraged. Divided as they were by racial differences, they were united and resolved upon their purpose.

Now their reward has come. I am very glad it has come at a time when it can be singled out. It stands out. It brings to a conclusion the work of as gallant an army as ever marched—and brings to a pitch of fame the military reputation of a commander who has always, I may say, enjoyed the fullest confidence of the House of Commons.



# THE GERMANS SURRENDER IN ITALY

*This chapter continues the history of the campaign in Italy from the fall of Rimini in September 1944 (described in Chapter 339) to the unconditional surrender of all German and Italian-Fascist forces in north Italy and west Austria, and the junction of Allied forces from north and south in the Brenner Pass in May 1945. It is written by Mr. Ruggero Orlando, an Italian writer employed during the period covered by Allied Forces H.Q., Italy*

THE simultaneous advance of the Allied armies into Germany from west and east overshadowed the end of the war in Italy. That long, difficult and gigantic campaign was a highly controversial topic for those politically or technically interested in the history of the Second Great War. Already in 1944, Lord Strabolgi published "Conquest of Italy," a book severely criticizing both political and military warfare in the Mediterranean. The unceasing interference of political leaders with military necessity for political reasons was stressed in the diaries of Captain Butcher, General Eisenhower's naval aide, and in "Top Secret," a tendentious book by Mr. Ralph Ingersoll, an American journalist on the staff of General Jacob Loucks Devers, U.S. Army, Deputy Supreme Commander, Mediterranean, 1944.

Official information available at the time of going to press (June 1946) makes it impossible to judge these comments accurately; but after 1943 the entire Mediterranean war,

## Changes in Official Attitude

and in particular the Italian campaign, seems undoubtedly to have suffered from continuous delays and setbacks due to diplomatic reasons and negotiations. The invasion of Italy from the south, at first described by Mr. Churchill as a major war operation, a direct attack on the "soft under-belly" of Hitler's fortress of Europe (see page 2829), later came to be described as a "diversionary operation," aimed above all at pinning down the greatest possible number of German forces south of the Alps. This change of attitude at supreme level was reflected in uncertainty and difficulties on the local strategic and even tactical planes.

In February 1944, General Devers said: "Replacements allocated to this theatre are not adequate to sustain operations in Italy on the present scale. At the present time, the United States part of the 5th Army has an effective net shortage of 13,072 officers and men." The American Selective Service System could not deliver the men considered necessary by the commanders on the spot; and the subsequent withdrawal of very considerable trained forces for

Operation "Anvil" (the landings in the south of France—see page 3456) made the situation in Italy worse. Again, during the winter of 1944-45, 8th Army units were diverted to meet the political crisis in Greece.

These heavy drains on trained personnel were in part compensated for by the retraining of anti-aircraft units as infantry (to form the 473rd Infantry), and by the arrival between July 1944 and January 1945 of the U.S. 91st Division, the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (see page 3473), a Negro division (the U.S. 92nd), the U.S. 10th Mountain Division, and three Italian combat groups, totaling six divisions and equipped with British weapons. The gains, however, says General Marshall, Chief of Staff to the United States Armies, in his report to the Secretary of War, "were more than offset by a February directive from the Combined Chiefs of Staff which ordered the transfer of five British and Canadian divisions to the European Theatre." The uncertain and changing nature of the central planning is confirmed in the next sentence: "The directive was later amended to send three to France, one to the eastern Mediterranean, and retain one division

in Italy for possible use in the impending final battle."

The torrential rains (see page 3473) at the end of the summer campaign of 1944 undoubtedly helped the German defenders. Instead of being the beginning of deployment in the Po valley, the conquest of Rimini by the 8th Army (September 21)

## Winter Campaign Impossible

and of the Apennine Futa Pass, between Florence and Bologna, by the 5th Army (September 23) (see page 3473) were but the closing touch of the liberation of central Italy. Mr. Churchill revealed that the forcing of the mountain line strongly fortified and "held by a hostile German Army practically as large as our own," cost the Allies nearly 50,000 casualties. On September 28 the Prime Minister explained why operations had slowed down: "General Alexander has now definitely broken into the basin of the Po, and here we exchange the barriers of mountain ridges for the perpetual interruption of the ground by streams and canals."

Autumn began with the Allied Armies deployed along a line between Viareggio, on the Ligurian Sea, and the marshes of Comacchio on the Adriatic. On the

## THROUGH MUD AND FLOOD ON THE ITALIAN FRONT

The German defence of Italy was helped by the heavy rains which set in at the end of the summer campaign of 1944. In spite of foul weather, however, Canadian troops of the 8th Army on October 24 overcame all resistance on the west bank of the Savio between Cesena and the Adriatic, where these transport vehicles (below) make their way through flood and mud, to reach the mouth of the river.

*Photo, British Official*







### CLEARING THE MINES FROM BRITAIN'S BEACHES

With the threat of invasion finally past, restrictions governing access to many of Britain's beaches were removed early in 1945. Clearance of anti-invasion obstructions was carried out by the Royal Engineers who were also employed in the dangerous task of locating mines laid along the shore. It was stated on May 31, 1945, that 98 officers and men had been killed in the course of this work. Here mines are being exploded on a beach, under the supervision of Sappers. Bringing in recovered mines through barbed-wire defences (below).

*Direct colour photographs by Fox Photos*







**Cpl. HUNTER**

(43rd Marine Commando)

The V.C. was awarded posthumously to Corporal Thomas Peck Hunter for his 'magnificent courage and leadership' on the night of April 1-2, 1945, in northern Italy. Twice offering himself as a target in order to save his Commando troop, he was the means of securing a vital objective at the cost of his own life. His skillful use of his Bren gun demoralized the enemy.



**Pte. BURTON**

(Duke of Wellington's Regiment)

In Italy on October 8, 1944, Private Richard Henry Burton displayed 'magnificent gallantry and total disregard of his own safety' for which he was awarded the V.C. During the attack on an important hill position, with most of his comrades either dead or wounded, he twice dashed forward on his own initiative, directing such accurate fire with his Bren gun that the enemy retired.



**Capt. BRUNT, M.C.**

(Sherwood Foresters)

For a 'magnificent action' in Italy on December 9, 1944, Captain John Henry Cound Brunt, M.C., was posthumously awarded the V.C. During violent counter-attacks by the 90th Panzer Grenadier Division, by personal example he rallied his men—outnumbered by at least three to one—to drive off the enemy. He personally killed at least a score of Germans. Next day he was killed.



**Major LASSEN, M.C. (Two Bars)**  
(Special Boat Service)

The only non-British or Empire recipient of the V.C. in the war of 1939-1945, Major Anders Lassen, M.C., reached Britain from Denmark in 1940 and joined the British Army. On the night of April 8-9, 1945, he displayed 'magnificent leadership' in face of overwhelming odds in a reconnaissance raid on the shores of Lake Comacchio, Italy, during which he was mortally wounded.

western half of the front stood the 5th Army (part American, part British, with the Brazilian Expeditionary Force), under the command of Lieutenant-General Mark Clark, U.S. Army. Its centre was the city of Lucca. On the right, the Adriatic sector along the Romagna plateau and the southern approaches of the Po delta, was deployed the 8th Army, commanded by Lieuten-

ant-General Sir Oliver Leese. Its centre was Cesena, on the river Savio.

On November 4, Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, head of the British Joint Staff Mission in Washington, died. Sir Henry Maitland Wilson was appointed his successor, Sir Harold Alexander, C.-in-C. Allied Armies in Italy, becoming Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, with promotion to the rank of Field-Marshal

(to have effect from June 4, date of the capture of Rome). Field-Marshal Alexander's successor as C.-in-C. of the Allied Armies in Italy (15th Army Group) was Lieutenant-General Mark Clark, who was succeeded as commander of the 5th Army by Lieutenant-General Lucian K. Truscott (commanding the U.S. VI Corps at Anzio). Lieutenant-General Sir Richard L. McCreery (who commanded the X Corps at Salerno and Cassino and planned and executed the crossing of the Garigliano) succeeded Sir Oliver Leese (promoted to command Allied Land Forces, South-East Asia—see page 3530) as commander of the 8th Army.

A sudden thrust by the British V Corps, forming the spearhead of the 8th Army, led to the capture on November 9 of Forlì with its airfield. But no hopes of a forthcoming winter campaign were raised.

**Partisans Told:**  
"Lie Low"

Two days later, indeed, Field-Marshal Alexander broadcast to the Italian partisans in the north his order for the winter: "Lie low." The next five months of Italian warfare saw the Allies mainly on the defensive. Patrols were active and, above all, intense liaison work proceeded between the Allied armies and the partisan forces of northern Italy's Committee of Liberation (see page 3701). A joint strategy was evolved, half military and half insurrectional—a subject of profitable study for historians. Field-Marshal Alexander became a very popular name



**KESSELRING, C.-IN-C. WEHRMACHT IN ITALY**

Field-Marshal Albert Kesselring was placed in command of the Central Italian Front in September 1943, and in the following spring succeeded Rommel as C.-in-C. of the Wehrmacht in Italy on the latter's departure for the Western Front. On March 22, 1945, it was announced that he had replaced Rundstedt as German C.-in-C. in the west. Above: Kesselring during an inspection tour in Italy.

Photo. Associated Press





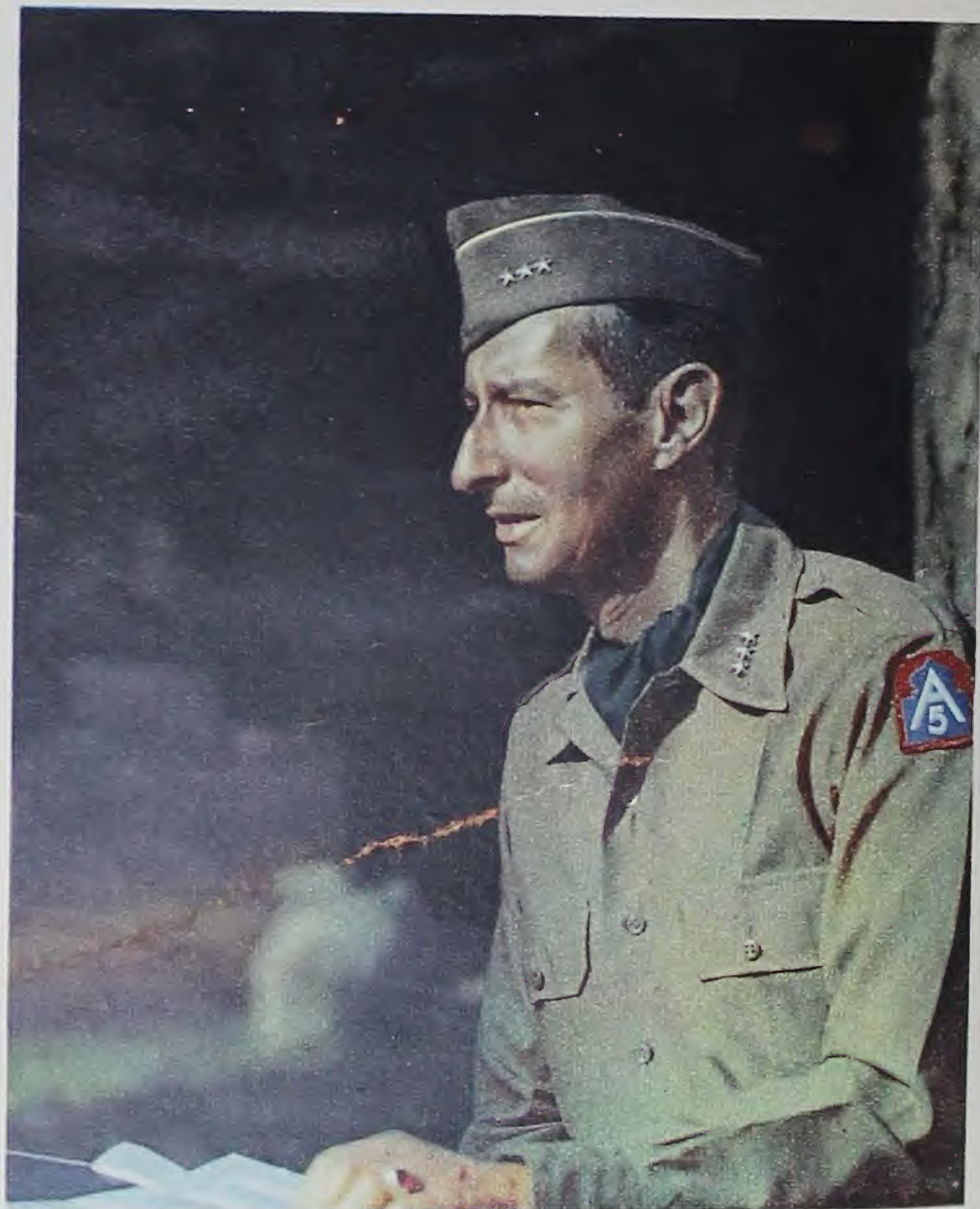
ADMIRAL RAYMOND A. SPRUANCE



ADMIRAL WILLIAM F. HALSEY



GENERAL OMAR N. BRADLEY



GENERAL MARK W. CLARK

Between June 1944 and August 1945, Admiral Spruance and Admiral Halsey alternated in command of the U.S. 5th Fleet. Admiral Spruance, awarded the U.S. Navy Cross in June 1945 for 'extraordinary heroism,' commanded the U.S. 5th Fleet at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. General Bradley, commanding U.S. Ground Invasion Forces in June 1944, later took control of the 12th (Central) Army Group. In December 1944, Lieut.-General Mark Clark, previously commanding the 5th Army, became Allied C.-in-C. in Italy.

*Direct colour photographs by the U.S. O.W.I. and Pictorial Press*





### HARRY S. TRUMAN—THIRTY-THIRD PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

On April 12, 1945, Franklin Delano Roosevelt died suddenly after serving less than three months of his fourth term in office. Senator Harry Shippe Truman, the Vice-President, succeeded him as thirty-third President of the United States. Mr. Truman, born in 1884 on a farm in Missouri, where he spent the first thirty-three years of his life, did not enter national politics till 1934, when he was elected Senator. He was appointed Chairman of the Senate War Investigating Committee shortly after America came into the war, and was chosen as Democratic candidate for the Vice-Presidency in July 1944. (See page 3254.)



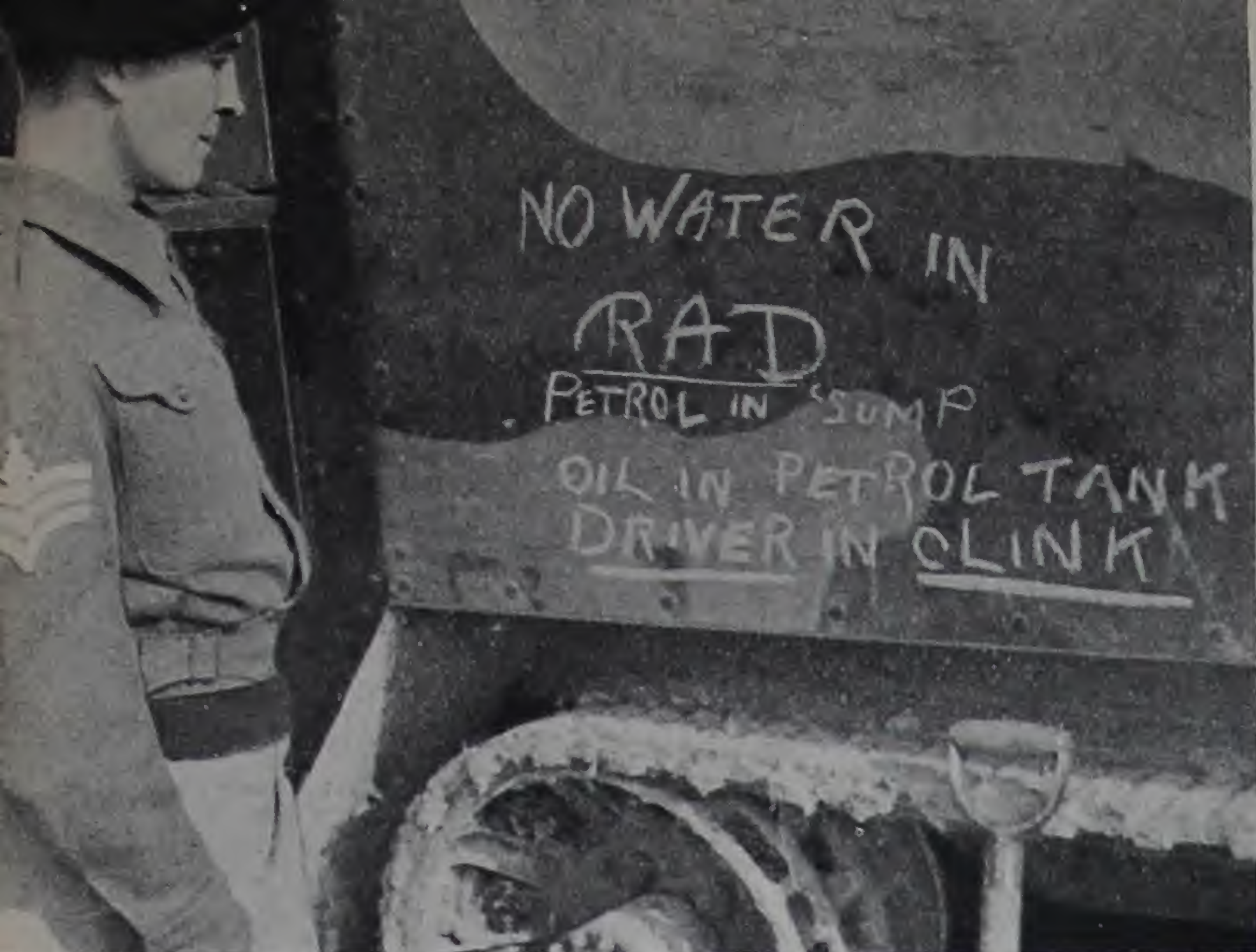


#### THE ROYAL NAVY'S PART IN OPERATION 'TORCH'

Operation 'Torch' was the code-name for the Allied landings in North Africa on November 8, 1942. Important political details of this majestic enterprise, as it was described by Mr. Churchill, given by the Prime Minister at a secret session of the House of Commons a month after it occurred, were not made public till after the war. Of the forces involved, Mr. Churchill declared that, though the U.S. land and air forces were predominant, 'on the sea, the proportion was overwhelmingly in our favour.' Here are British battleships and an aircraft-carrier of the covering force of more than 350 British, American, Canadian, Polish, Netherlands and Norwegian men-of-war (see page 2392). The landings are described in Chapter 256.

*British Official*





### ON THE ROAD TO RAVENNA

British and Canadian forces of the 8th Army captured the famous medieval city of Ravenna on December 5, 1944, and pushed on towards Ferrara. Right, 75-mm. S.P. guns on half-tracks, acting as tank-busters, manned by men of the King's Dragoon Guards, formed the spearhead of the advancing Allies. Left, typical Army humour on one of these S.P. guns outside Ravenna.

among tens of thousands of irregulars, whose operations were officially recorded and, when no longer under security veil, were broadcast daily by Allied Headquarters from autumn 1943 to the end of the Italian campaign. The co-ordination between Armies and patriots in Italy was considered the best achieved in any theatre of operations, and accounted for the perfect timing of the popular revolt which broke out in northern Italy at the beginning of the Allied spring offensive (*see* page 3706).

The liaison between troops and partisans was put successfully to the test in two offensive operations during the

#### Partisan Army Liaison

winter: when British and Canadian forces of the 8th Army captured Ravenna (December 5) and when the New Zealand 2nd Division occupied Faenza after the hardest battle of the season (December 14-16). The famous Byzantine mosaics of Ravenna and Dante's tomb escaped unscathed. The conquest of Faenza

was followed by battles of the 8th Army's infantry through difficult and heavily mined country, in appalling weather conditions as the Allies closed in on the Senio river, next German defence line, guarding the Po valley from the south-east.

On December 26 the Germans attacked the left flank of the 5th Army in Tuscany. Their offensive, doubtless intended to coincide with Rundstedt's attack in Belgium, was in fact launched at the moment when that breakthrough had spent itself (*see* Chapter 336). Negro troops of the 92nd Division withdrew down the Serchio valley, north of Lucca, and abandoned the town of Barga (27th). Two brigades (the 19th and 21st) of the 8th Indian Division (which was commanded by Major-General Dudley Russell) were rushed from the 8th Army front to stem the

onslaught, and helped the Americans to stop the enemy offensive. By December 29, most of the lost ground was regained, though, owing to subsequent wintry conditions, the reconquest of the last of it was not completed until February 6, 1945. German propaganda tried to boost this thrust into a major offensive. It was rather a local engagement, in a sector where the situation had long been, and remained, confused. Barga is sited in a lovely mountain landscape, famous in Italian literature, a plateau between the Apennines and the pre-Apennines of Garfagnana. The Germans had plenty of artillery in the former, and the Americans in the latter, and Barga was for some time a sort of no-man's-land.

#### Engagement in Tuscany

During the first weeks of 1945, heavy snow closed most mountain passes to military traffic, and communications were extremely difficult. Operations for some weeks were confined in the main to activity by the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces (*see* Chapter 356)

### SCOTS AND IRISH ENTER FORLI

Stiff opposition was encountered by the 8th Army as it advanced to capture Forli on November 9, 1944. The Ronco, last river before the town, was crossed on November 1 and a firm bridge-head established by the British V Corps. Left, Gurkhas wade the swiftly flowing Ronco with a life-line. Right, townspeople at Forli greet Highland infantry and tanks of the North Irish Horse, first troops to enter the town.

*Photos, British Official*







### ITALIANS IN THE ALLIED ARMIES

Fighting alongside the Allied armies in Italy towards the end of 1944 were three all-Italian groups, each two divisions strong. Here an Italian unit, equipped with British guns, ammunition and clothing, waits to go into action on a sector of the 8th Army front. The men shelter behind a Churchill tank while the tank's guns answer the enemy's fire.

*Photo, British Official*

against targets in Austria, South Germany, the Balkans, and north Italy, and in the supply of Italian and Yugoslav partisans. The reconstituted Italian Air Force was used not for contacts with the patriots in north Italy, but to supply Marshal Tito's forces, and to protect them against German shipping covering the Dalmatian shores.

Canadian troops of the 8th Army reached Lake Comacchio on January 6,

1945, cutting off a number of enemy detachments in the swampy ground north of Ravenna. American and Brazilian units of the 5th Army opened a local offensive on the night of February 18-19, and occupied several heights in the upper Reno valley, west of the road between Pistoia and Bologna. On March 3, a local offensive on the 8th Army front enabled Italian regular and partisan forces to clear the

### NEW ZEALANDERS CAPTURE FAENZA

The important Italian town of Faenza fell to troops of the New Zealand 2nd Division fighting with the 8th Army on December 16, 1944, after a fierce two-days' battle in which Italian patriots took part. Below, New Zealand infantry make a difficult passage as they enter Faenza over the ruins of a bridge which had once spanned the River Lamone

*Photo, British Official*



enemy from the whole coastal sector south of the Po di Primaro.

There were at this time, twenty-six German divisions in Italy, including some of their best troops such as the

26th Panzer, the 19th Light, the 232nd, the 4th and 1st Parachute Divisions, and in order

**Relative  
Strength  
of Forces**

to prevent their transfer to Germany or retreat to the "Southern Redoubt," which it seemed possible Hitler might try to organize, a plan known as Operation "Grapeshot" was drafted whose aim was to trap and destroy the German armies of northern Italy in Italy. The Allied 15th Army Group (5th and 8th Armies) then consisted of the following divisions: seven American,



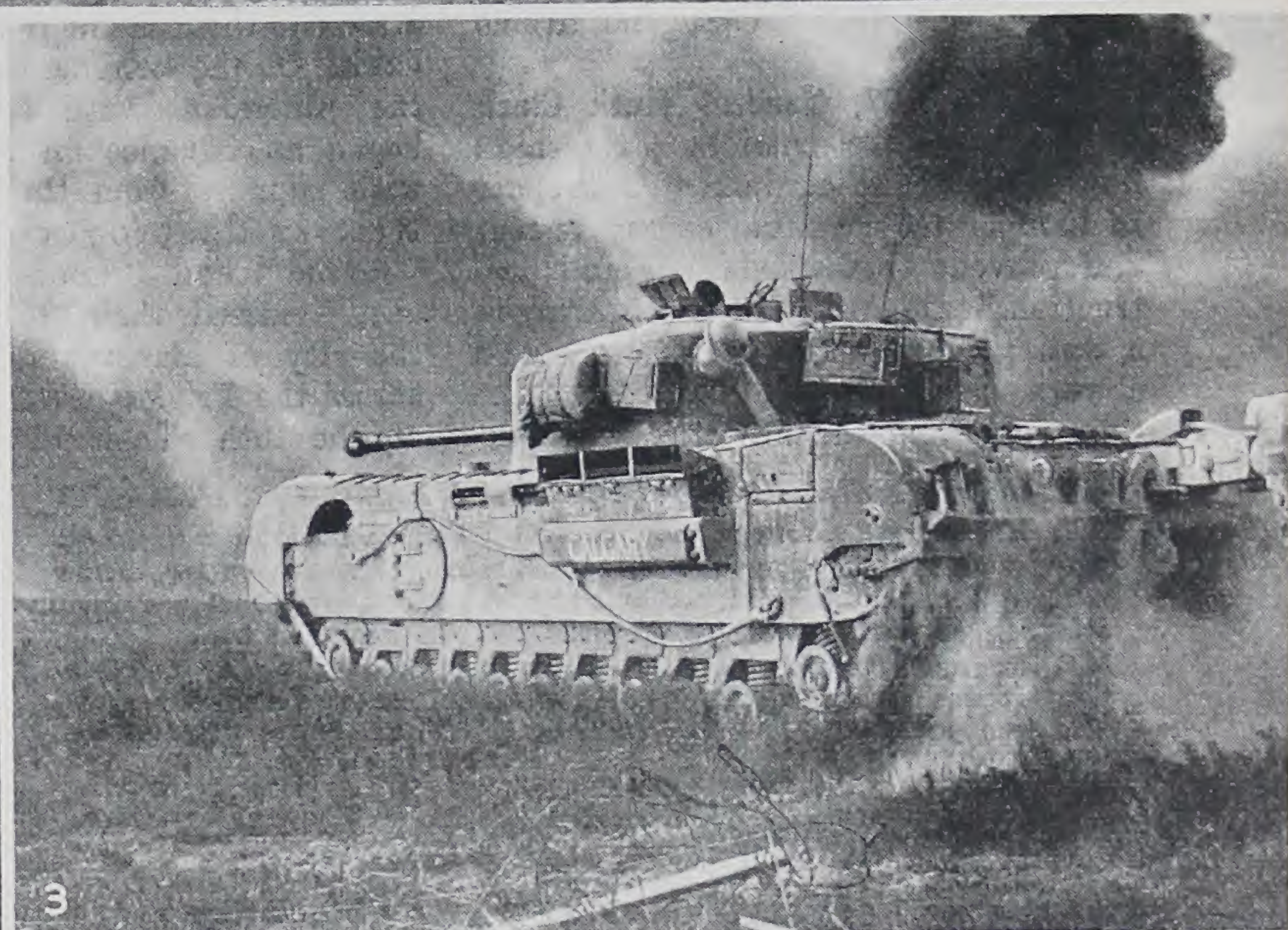
### C.-IN-C., FIFTH ARMY

Lieutenant-General Lucian K. Truscott, Jr., who commanded the U.S. VI Corps at Anzio, was appointed commander of the 5th Army in Italy (announced December 6, 1944) in succession to Lieutenant-General Mark Clark, who succeeded Field-Marshal Alexander as C.-in-C., Allied Armies in Italy. Truscott founded the U.S. Rangers in England and took part in the Dieppe raid (see Chap. 243).

one South African, twelve British, six Italian, one Indian, two Polish, one New Zealand, and one Brazilian, plus a Jewish brigade. The average strength of a German division was some 10,000; that of an Allied division was much less. The Allies were superior in aircraft and, on the whole, in equipment; but they were outnumbered.

"Grapeshot" was based on strong concentration of effort around Bologna. Two spearheads, one from the 5th, the other from the 8th Army, were to push forward respectively from the rugged mountains south-west of the city, and





### CROSSING OF THE SENIO RIVER

The final Allied offensive in Italy began on April 9, 1945, when nearly 1,000 Allied Fortresses and Liberators struck a powerful blow at German positions directly opposite the 8th Army between the Senio and Santerno rivers. Over 3,000 100-lb. H.E. and 180,000 fragmentation bombs were dropped, the whole area being afterwards covered with an impenetrable wall of smoke and dust 4,000 feet high. That night the 2nd New Zealand Division, under Lt.-Gen. Sir Bernard Freyberg, V.C., stormed the Senio and spanned it with Bailey bridges. 1. New Zealand infantrymen scaling the high dyke of the Senio. Those in the foreground are carrying sections of a footbridge. 2. British-manned Vickers heavy machine-guns support the New Zealanders' attack. 3. Churchill tank plunges through the smoke and dust raised by the T.A.F. dive-bombers. 4. Maori medical orderlies lead the way for a casualty who is being helped by two German prisoners.





### CLOSING STAGES OF THE CAMPAIGN IN ITALY

This map shows where the last battles in Italy were fought, from the fall of Rimini in September 1944 to the final surrender by General von Vietinghoff-Scheel of all German and Italian-Fascist forces in northern Italy and western Austria on April 29, 1945. It also includes the area where the Partisan troops were most active.

from the eastern plain—the Senio river front. The right wing of the 8th Army was to march towards Ferrara, to clear the southern bank of the Po. Then both Armies, from the line Bologna–Ferrara, were to cross the Po and the Adige, and, pursuing the enemy, close the Alpine passes.

On March 27, General Mark Clark broadcast to the patriots. He said: "Overhaul your equipment. Prepare to hamper the eventual enemy retreat and prevent enemy sabotage and destruction." On April 2, the 8th Army in a daring amphibious operation gained a very useful foothold between Lake Comacchio and the Adriatic, a precau-

tion against possible German counter-attack on the extreme right of the Allied flank. On the extreme left of the front, the Americans with similar purpose began an advance on April 5 which, with support from the British destroyers "Marne" and "Look-out," carried them to the city of Massa and across the Frigido river on the 10th. Their ad-

vance was the signal for local partisans to rise and seize Carrara.

In the evening of April 9, after a heavy air bombardment (see table in page 3650) and an artillery barrage said

### BRITISH COMMANDO FORCE AT LAKE COMACCHIO

By a daring amphibious operation, a British Commando force with the 8th Army landed at dawn on April 2, 1945, north of Ravenna on the narrow sandspit between Lake Comacchio and the Adriatic, overrunning German defences and taking over 200 prisoners. It was here that Major Lassen, M.C. (see page 3710) won the V.C. Right, 'Kangaroo' tank after the operation. It was in radio contact with all positions. Below, Commando signalmen occupy slit trenches recently used by the Nazis. Photos, British Official



to have been greater than that at El Alamein, the 8th Army crossed the Senio river in strength between a point about nine miles north of Faenza and the southern shore of Lake Comacchio. On that date, the formations under 8th Army command were: British 6th Armoured Division; British 56th and 78th Infantry Divisions; 8th and 10th Indian Infantry Divisions; New Zealand 2nd Division; 5th Kresowa and 3rd Carpathian Divisions and Polish 2nd Armoured Brigade; Cremona, Friuli and Folgore Groups (each two divisions strong) of Italian infantry;





## TWO ALLIED ARMIES REACH THE RIVER PO

On April 23, 1945, it was announced that both the 5th and 8th Armies had reached the banks of the River Po. The following day the 8th Army captured the industrial city of Ferrara and the ancient town of Modena. Above, Italian partisan troops, who had assisted in the liberation of Modena, round-up a group of cheerful-looking German stragglers in the outskirts of the town.

*Photo, British Official*

plus a considerable contingent of smaller units, including the 1st Jewish Brigade.

Flame-throwers went into action along the whole front ahead of the 8th Indian Division, the New Zealanders, and the Polish Corps. The British 78th Infantry

### Battle for Argenta

and 6th Armoured Divisions swept through to join the 56th Division and the New Zealanders in the battle for Argenta. Imola fell to the Poles on April 15, on which day the 5th Army joined in the offensive by an assault in the rugged central sector south of Vergato. On April 16, Field-Marshal Alexander issued an order of the day: "Final victory is near. The German forces are now very groggy and only need one mighty punch to knock them out for good. The moment has now come for us to take the field for the last battle which will end the war in Europe. You know what our comrades in the west and east are doing on the battlefields. It is now our turn to play our decisive part. It will not be a walk-over; a mortally wounded beast can still be very dangerous. You must be prepared for a hard and bitter fight, but the end

is quite certain—there is not the slightest shadow of doubt about that."

Although the Germans concentrated their defence against the 8th Army, they were defeated in the terrific battle for the "Argenta gap," half-way between Ravenna and Ferrara. Argenta itself was taken on April 18 against, according to General Mark Clark, "some of the best troops of the German army in formidable natural positions, strengthened throughout the winter months with all the ingenuity and thoroughness of the German High Command." On April 20 U.S. forces of the 5th Army cut the Via Emilia between Bologna and Modena, and South African troops entered Casalecchio, three miles south-west of Bologna.

## ONE MORE RIVER!

But it isn't only "one more river" - this time it is **THE** river!

*It is the mighty Po!*

Do you remember the hell of the rivers Sangro, Rapido, Liri, Volturno and Garigliano? Do you remember the lives that were sacrificed in crossing these rivers?

Put these rivers all together and the result will be smaller than the **Po!**

Also when you crossed these rivers, the Germans were in retreat and had no time to prepare defenses.

But covering the Po you will find a blanket of death... Artillery, Nebelwerfers, Mortars and Spandaus.

The whole Po area is a network of canals and is impassable for tanks.

Rush  
In!  
Various  
Exiting  
Revelations  
Prepared  
Oh Boy!

And here are a few facts about the Po:

At its shallowest part (between Adda and Mincio) it is 7 ft. deep.

At the deepest part (near Pavia) it is 20 ft. deep.

The width varies from 208 to 1,040 yds.

The banks are mostly sheer and between 18 and 30 ft. high.

The speed of the Po exceeds 20 m. p. h.

"**PO**" means death and suffering.  
"**P. O. W.**" means security and comfort!

Think it over, only

Fools rush in...

## AND 'ONE MORE RIVER' IT WAS

In an ingenuous attempt to undermine the morale of troops of the 8th Indian Division advancing towards the banks of the River Po in April 1945, the Germans dropped leaflets behind the lines. The grisly picture painted by the Nazis had no effect on the Indians who read the sheets with derision—and proceeded to cross yet 'one more river.'





#### INDIAN TROOPS STORMED THE SANTERNO

Against fanatical resistance, troops of the 8th Indian Division helped to breach the powerful defences of the Senio river, twelve miles west of Ravenna, on April 10, 1945, when two young Sepoys, Namdeo Jadhao and Ali Haidar, won the V.C. (see page 3525). Next day they stormed the Santerno river with flame-throwers in close support. Here, Indian troops cross an improvised bridge spanning the Santerno

*Photo, British Official*

#### ALLIED FORCES DRIVE TOWARDS BOLOGNA

Fighting with the 8th Army, the 8th Indian Division, with New Zealanders and Poles, spearheaded the crossing of the flooded River Senio on April 10, 1945. Farther south, troops of the Gurkha Brigade captured Medicina in their drive towards Bologna. Here Indian troops advance up a ridge; the man nearest the camera carries a 'Lifebuoy' flame-thrower (see plate following page 3102). *Photo, British Official*

On April 21, a date celebrated in Italy as the anniversary of the foundation of Rome by Romulus, the ancient city of Bologna was liberated by the simultaneous entry of 8th Army troops from **Bologna** the east, 5th Army **Liberated** troops from south and west. Seat of one of the oldest and most famous universities in Europe, Bologna is also an important industrial centre and controls the most important Apennine passes and all the big roads on the southern bank of the Po. Two days later, spearheads of both Armies reached that greatest of Italian rivers. On the 24th, Ferrara and Modena fell to the 8th Army, and both armies crossed the Po at several points: first troops of the 5th Army across were the U.S. 10th Mountain Division, first of the 8th, the Grenadier Guards and New Zealand infantry. On the same day, the 5th Army entered the naval base of Spezia.

Since the offensive began, more than 40,000 prisoners (including Lieutenant-





### BOLOGNA FALLS TO THE FIFTH AND EIGHTH ARMIES

Climax of eight months' hard and difficult fighting across the fifty miles of mountainous country between Florence and Bologna was reached on April 21, 1945, when U.S. troops of the 5th Army and Polish forces of the 8th Army simultaneously entered the ancient city of Bologna which had been abandoned by the enemy. Here U.S. troops relax in one of the city squares.

*Photo, U.S. Official*

General Count von Schwerin, commanding the 76th Panzer Division, and Major-General Schellwitz, commanding the 305th Infantry Division) had been captured. Enemy resistance remained nevertheless strong and organized.

Insurrection in the north broke out on April 24 (see page 3706), the patriots rapidly securing control of Genoa, Milan and other cities.

#### 5th Army Meets the French

On the 27th, the 5th Army liberated Piacenza and entered

Genoa. It then drove on beyond Savona, to make contact with the French who had crossed the frontier and captured Ventimiglia and Bordighera on the 27th.

On April 29, Colonel-General Heinrich von Vietinghoff-Scheel, Kesselring's successor in Italy, unconditionally surrendered all German and Italian-Fascist forces in northern Italy and western Austria, aggregating over 1,000,000 men. The surrender (see Historic Document CCCII, page 3708) was signed at Allied Force Headquarters, Caserta, by two German plenipoten-



### MOPPING-UP IN RUINED ARGENTA

The vital 'Argenta Gap,' sole practicable route for enemy mobile forces west of Lake Comacchio, was brought almost completely under Allied control by the capture on April 18, 1945, of Argenta town by troops of the 8th Army who afterwards pushed on along the road to Ferrara. Here a British patrol mops up among the devastation in ruined Argenta

*Photo, British Official*





### ALLIES FROM SOUTH AND WEST LINK AT BRENNER

On May 4, 1945, troops of the U.S. 7th Army (part of General Eisenhower's command), after a night drive in snow and ice through the Brenner Pass, made contact at Vipitino, ten miles south-west of the Pass, with forces of the 5th Army driving north, thus completely overrunning the Nazis' 'Southern Redoubt.' Above, after the link-up at Brenner, with Nazi prisoners from Italy (left) tramping to captivity.

*Photo, U.S. Official*

tiaries, one on behalf of General von Vietinghoff-Scheel and the other on behalf of Obergruppenführer Karl Wolff, supreme commander of the S.S. and police, and German general plenipotentiary of the Wehrmacht in Italy. Lieutenant-General W. D. Morgan, Chief of Staff of Allied Force Headquarters, signed for the Allies. The surrender was not made public until May 2, the day it came into effect, by which date the Allies had entered Venice, Padua, Milan and Turin, all of which they found controlled by the patriots.

Spearheads of the 5th Army entered Como and reached the Swiss Frontier at Chiassa, thus splitting all enemy forces in northern Italy,

**Brazilian Success** on April 29. On that day also the entire German 148th Infantry Division surrendered to the Brazilian Expeditionary Force headed by General Mascarenhas da Moreas, the Brazilians taking over 6,000 prisoners and over 1,000 enemy vehicles; and the New Zealand 2nd Division reached the Piave. The South African 6th Armoured Division with U.S. Infantry took Treviso on the 30th.

The New Zealand 2nd Division, under Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyberg, V.C., crossed the Isonzo and linked with Yugoslav troops on May 1, received the surrender of the German commander in Trieste (see page 3707) and entered Gorizia on May 2. Troops of the U.S. 85th and 88th Divisions of the 5th Army made contact with troops of the U.S.

7th Army (see Chapter 369) near the Brenner Pass on May 4. The Allied forces in Italy had joined hands with those who had landed in the west.

"The Italian triumph," said General Marshall, "is a striking demonstration of the solidarity of the United Nations. Fighting under the 15th Army Group, at some time during the Italian campaign, were Americans, British, Canadians, French, New Zealanders, South Africans, Poles, Indians, Brazilians, Italians, Greeks, Moroccans, Algerians, Arabs, Goums, Senegalese, and a brigade of Jewish soldiers."

Alexander's  
Polyglot  
Armies

"The entire campaign was slow and bitter. The Allied troops did not have the superiority they enjoyed in western Europe, where geography had compelled us to make the great effort. None the less, the Italian campaign was a heavy contribution to the successes on the western front, pinning down German forces which Hitler needed badly to reinforce his weakened armies, both in the east and the west."



### NEW ZEALANDERS ENTER TRIESTE

The famous Adriatic port of Trieste was surrendered by the German commander to General Freyberg on May 2, 1945, and the following day was entered by New Zealand troops of the 8th Army whose armour here pushes through a crowded street. Trieste belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Empire up till 1918 and, despite Yugoslav claims, was awarded to Italy by the Treaty of St. Germain because of its predominantly Italian population.

*Photo, British Official*



**May 1.** British and U.S. bridge-heads across Lower Elbe linked up; U.S. 3rd Army reached Czech border N.E. of Passau; French 1st Army crossed Austrian frontier in Bregenz area. Charlottenburg and Schöneberg districts of Berlin cleared. 2nd New Zealand Division linked with Tito's forces in Italy. Australian 9th Division landed on Tarakan, N.E. Borneo.

**May 2.** British 2nd Army reached Baltic at Wismar; U.S. 9th Army made second link with Russians at Ballow, N. of Arneburg; 2nd T.A.F. heavily attacked Kiel (night). Berlin fell to 1st White Russian and 1st Ukrainian Armies. German surrender in Italy came into effect. Anglo-Indian amphibious force landed near Rangoon. Stand-down of British Civil Defence Services and Royal Observer Corps; air-raid warning system discontinued.

**May 3.** Collapse of whole German defence system in N.W. Germany; Hamburg surrendered to British 2nd Army; Oldenburg surrendered to Canadians; Americans captured Braunau, Hitler's Austrian birthplace. British link-up with Russians on Wismar-Wittenberge line; Red Army freed Teschen on Polish-Czech frontier. New Zealand troops entered Trieste and Gorizia. Rangoon liberated.

**May 4.** All German forces in N.W. Germany, Holland and Denmark surrendered unconditionally to 21st Army Group at Lüneburg; on U.S. 9th Army front remnants of German 9th and 12th Armies surrendered; U.S. 7th Army captured Berchtesgaden, Salzburg, and Innsbruck and drove through Brenner Pass to Italy. Russians took Zlin (Bohemia), linked with Americans on the Elbe, near Dessau.

**May 5.** 2nd White Russian Army took Swinemünde and Peenemünde, site of Baltic V-bomb research station; British 7th Armoured Division crossed Danish frontier and entered Jutland. Patriot rising broke out in Prague. U.S. 3rd Army captured Linz, capital of Upper Austria. Davao (Mindanao, Philippines) fell to U.S. troops.

**May 6.** 2nd White Russian Army forced the Stralsunder Fahrwasser, on the Baltic, captured island of Rügen. U.S. 3rd Army entered Pilsen. 5th Army crossed Austrian frontier from Italy. Australian 9th Division captured Tarakan airfield (Borneo). Super-Fortresses bombed Honshu and Kyushu (Japan).

**May 7.** Germany's unconditional surrender to Western Allies and the U.S.S.R. signed at Rheims; 3rd Canadian Division occupied Emden; 1st Ukrainian Army captured Breslau; British troops of 1st Canadian Army entered Utrecht. Australian and Dutch troops stormed Tarakan Hill.

**May 8.** V.E. Day. Germany's unconditional surrender signed in Berlin. 1st Ukrainian Army captured Dresden. Capitulation at Oslo of all German forces in Norway. Tito's troops freed Zagreb

(Yugoslavia). Admiralty issued wireless surrender orders for German Fleet.

**May 9.** Goering and Kesselring captured by U.S. troops in Austria. Channel Islands liberated after 5 years of enemy occupation. German garrisons at Lorient, St. Nazaire, and La Rochelle surrendered. Surrender of Germans in the Dodecanese. Marianas-based Super-Fortresses heavily bombed Japan. Fresh U.S. landing on Mindanao (Philippines).

**May 10.** Prague entered by Russian tanks. Kiel occupied. First U-boat to surrender to Royal Navy (U 249) put in at Portland, Dorset. U.S. troops crossed Asa River estuary in S. Okinawa. All lighting restrictions lifted in Great Britain.

**May 11.** German garrison at Dunkirk surrendered. U.S. 3rd Army linked with Russians E. of Pilsen. 14th Army forces entered Sandoway (Burma). Australians across the Hongorai River (Bougainville). Chinese entered Foochow.

**May 12.** British troops went ashore at Jersey (Channel Islands). S.S. General "Sepp" Dietrich captured by U.S. troops in Austria. Germans in Crete surrendered. Aircraft of British Pacific Fleet heavily bombed Miyako and Ishigaki (Saki group, Ryukyu Islands).

**May 13.** Rear-Admiral Brüning, commanding German naval forces operating from Holland, arrived at Felixstowe. In New Guinea, Australian 6th Division made amphibious landing E. of Wewak.

**May 14.** Scots Guards took possession of Heligoland; Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Gestapo chief, captured by U.S. 3rd Army troops. Marianas-based Super-Fortresses heavily attacked Nagoya (Japan). Australians in New Guinea cleared Wewak village.

**May 15.** British and Norwegian Naval Mission arrived in Bergen. On Okinawa U.S. forces penetrated defences of Naha, the capital. Australians made further crossing of Hongorai River (Bougainville). Japan abrogated treaty with Germany.

**May 16.** British troops went ashore on Alderney (Channel Islands), taking 3,200 German prisoners. U.S. 7th Army captured Robert Ley, German "Labour Front" leader. U.S. 77th Infantry Division seized "Chocolate Drop Hill," Okinawa, after 5-day battle. Aircraft of British E. Indies Fleet attacked Japanese cruiser in N. Malacca Straits.

**May 17.** British carrier-based aircraft heavily bombed Saki group (Ryukyus). White Paper on Burma issued in London.

**May 18.** Chinese announced capture of Foochow. "Sugar Loaf Hill," N.E. of Naha, Okinawa, captured. U.S. Navy aircraft heavily damaged industrial targets in Central Kyushu, shot down 62 enemy planes. U.S. troops on Mindanao captured Valencia. Admiralty announced that central area of North Sea was open for fishing.

**May 19.** Marianas-based Super-Fortresses in strength attacked Tokyo. On Okinawa, "Carbuncle Hill" stormed.

U.S. and Filipino forces captured the Ipo Dam, N.E. of Manila. Marshal Tito claimed right to occupy Trieste.

**May 20.** British aircraft bombed the Saki group. Announced in Melbourne that Australian 9th Division held two-thirds of Tarakan and that on Bougainville the 3rd and 11th Divisions had reached Ruri Bay, cutting off enemy communications along the E. seaboard. Tito withdrew troops from Carinthia.

**May 21.** Australians captured "Hill 105" on Tarakan (Borneo). Off Formosa, a single U.S. aircraft destroyed a convoy of 5 enemy ships, totalling 17,000 tons. Acting premier of Syria asked Allies to evacuate all foreign troops from Syria.

**May 22.** U.S. troops took Yonabaru, second town of Okinawa. On Tarakan, Australians seized "Helen's Hill." Announced from Washington that Japanese were attacking the U.S. with explosives dropped from small long-range balloons. Field-Marshal Montgomery appointed C-in-C. of British Forces of Occupation in Germany.

**May 23.** Over 550 Super-Fortresses dropped 4,500 tons of incendiaries on Tokyo in heaviest raid on Japan to date. Resignation of Mr. Churchill and the Coalition Government.

**May 24.** German cruisers "Prinz Eugen" and "Nürnberg" sailed from Copenhagen to Wilhelmshaven under British naval escort. Australians in New Guinea encircled Wewak. Aircraft of British Pacific Fleet raided the Saki group. U.S. Ryukyus-based Thunderbolts bombed Kyushu.

**May 25.** Super-Fortresses mass-raided Tokyo at night, dropping 4,000 tons of incendiaries. 14th Army forces seized Bassein, centre of Burmese rice trade. General de Gaulle invested Field-Marshal Montgomery with Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour.

**May 26.** Tokyo again raided heavily by Super-Fortresses; buildings damaged included the Imperial Palace. Mr. Churchill announced new Cabinet.

**May 27.** S.H.A.E.F. announced the change of its H.Q. from Rheims to Frankfurt-on-Main. Chinese troops recaptured Nanning, capital of Kwangsi.

**May 28.** 450 Super-Fortresses attacked Yokohama, dropping over 3,200 tons of fire bombs. Japanese "suicide" attacks on U.S. shipping off Okinawa.

**May 29.** Australians in Tarakan, capturing "Freda's Hill," reached the N.W. coast at Cape Djoeta. Belgian Socialists demanded abdication of King Leopold. French shelled Damascus.

**May 30.** U.S. troops captured Shuri Castle on Okinawa. On Luzon, Montalban Dam seized, completing U.S. control of Manila's water supply. British and U.S. citizens evacuated from Damascus.

**May 31.** Osaka, Japan's second city, heavily bombed by 450 Super-Fortresses. General Chiang Kai-shek resigned Chinese Premiership, succeeded by Dr. T. V. Soong. Norwegian Government returned to Oslo.



# BERLIN FALLS TO THE RED ARMY

*This chapter, the last in the account of the campaigns in eastern Europe by Major-General Sir Charles Gwynn, the Military Editor, carries the Armies of Marshals Zhukov and Koniev from the Oder to Berlin, with the surrender of which on May 2, 1945, the war against Germany virtually ended. Simultaneous operations by the Soviet armies in the south are recorded in Chapter 354*

**B**y the end of March 1945, Zhukov had cleared the east bank of the Oder, eliminating the last bridge-heads the Germans held across the river (see page 3559). He had also liquidated all blocks on his lines of communications, and in conjunction with Rokossovsky had annihilated the Germans in Pomerania on his right flank. On his right Rokossovsky was in process of completing the mopping up of Danzig, and on his left Koniev had reached the Neisse on a broad front. Farther south Malinovsky and Tolbukhin were ap-

in Hungary and Slovakia continued to advance, Marshal Zhukov (1st White Russian Army) and Marshal Koniev (1st Ukrainian Army) were apparently not quite ready. Not until April 19 was it announced that their final offensive had started on the 16th with a crossing of both the Oder and the Neisse by Polish tanks and infantry. By that time Vienna had fallen, and in the west the Allies had reached the Elbe. It is not yet clear why Koniev and Zhukov remained comparatively inactive for so long. Presumably the

main reason was the necessity of completing a build up of material and troops which would ensure success. Breslau and Glogau, which still held out, may have delayed Koniev, for they blocked his best lines of communication. Moreover, it had become evident that though on their western front the morale of the Germans was breaking and resistance becoming patchy, yet they were determined to hold the Oder-Neisse line at all costs, possibly hoping that if that could be achieved the western Allies might concede more favourable terms.

It was therefore essential that the success of the Russian offensive when delivered should be assured. An unsuccessful attack launched before the Allies had closed up to the Elbe might have enabled the Germans to carry out the scheme for making their final stand in the south. So long, however, as Zhukov and Koniev remained poised, the Germans could not disengage with safety nor transfer troops to reinforce their western front. Whatever were the reasons for the somewhat intriguing delay in launching it, the Soviet offensive quickly developed in devastating fashion in spite of desperate German resistance. It took three days of hard



## LAST NAZI CALL-UP

The Red Army launched its final offensive on April 16, 1945, with a crossing of the rivers Oder and Neisse. By this time the Germans were helpless to stem the Russian tide. These German photographs—among the last to be taken of their own troops—show members of the Volkssturm (above) and a youthful Nazi (right) in action on the Oder front. *Photos, Associated Press*

proaching Vienna (see Chapter 354); while in the west General Eisenhower's armies were well across the Rhine and had encircled a large German force in the Ruhr (see page 3661 and Chapter 369).

All therefore seemed well set for the final effort to crush the last remnants of German resistance. But although the Allies in the west and the Russians







Himmler, deserting his master, offered to surrender to the western Allies, only to be turned down since he appeared still to hope to maintain resistance to the Russian advance. (See also announcements by German leaders in pages 3640-41.) The Germans in the north were in fact in no position to come to Hitler's rescue, for in addition to the pressure exercised on them from the west Rokossovsky had on April 26 crossed the lower Oder, taken Stettin

### ON THE FRISCHES HAFF

The 3rd White Russian Army on March 15, 1945, fought its way along the waterlogged shore of the Frisches Haff in East Prussia to cut in two the enemy formations defending Königsberg, which fell on April 9 (see page 3560). Above, remains of Nazi transport column at Frauenburg, on the Frisches Haff, after attack by Soviet Stormoviks. Right, some of the seven thousand Germans taken at Heiligenbeil, last German defence point on the Frisches Haff, on March 25.

fighting to enlarge bridge-heads over the two rivers and to get the main forces in motion, but after that the issue was never in doubt.

Koniev appeared at first to be making for Dresden and Zhukov for Berlin, the suburbs of which were reached on April 22. The following day Orders of

**Frankfort-on-Oder Captured** the Day announced that Zhukov had taken Frankfort-on-Oder, Oranienburg (site of a

notorious concentration camp), and other towns and had broken into Berlin from the east, north-east, and north; and that Koniev, having penetrated the deep defences of the Neisse, and captured Kottbus and other towns in a wheel northwards, had entered Berlin from the south. By April 25 Zhukov, having at an early stage initiated an outflanking movement north of the city, had linked up with Koniev north-west of Potsdam, thus completing Berlin's encirclement.

Koniev meanwhile with his left continued to advance towards Dresden, crossed the Elbe, and near Torgau joined hands with the Americans on April 25 (see Chapter 369), U.S. and Soviet patrols having had some difficulty in recognizing each other. This great event elicited an exchange of messages to the Allied troops from Marshal Stalin, Mr. Churchill and President Truman, in which the link-up was taken as an assurance of the determination of



the Allies to prosecute the war together till the last remnants of German resistance were crushed. Although these messages were an acknowledgment of a great comradeship in arms and a call for a final effort, their main purpose probably was to dispel any lingering hopes the Germans might entertain of driving a wedge between the Allies or of obtaining divergent terms from them.

There was to be no race to Berlin, however, and evidently each of the Allies had its assigned task. The Russian attack on Berlin, where it was known that Hitler had decided to make a last ditch stand, was therefore vigorously maintained and made steady progress in street to street fighting.

On April 27 the satellite towns of Rathenow, Spandau and Potsdam (spiritual home of German militarism) were taken, making the ring of encirclement all the closer. Hitler, who appears at first to have expected his armies in the north to come to his assistance, about this time gave up all hope, and

and was thrusting rapidly into western Pomerania. It is not clear how much opposition Rokossovsky was meeting, but probably it was feeble for from British sources came reports that German units retreating before him were reaching the British lines and entreating officers in vain to accept their surrender to save them from falling into the hands of the Russians.

The Germans obviously were by now in a hopeless position. Koniev's link with the Americans in Saxony was consolidated and barred all communication between north and south. In the south

**East-West Link Consolidated**

the U.S. 3rd and 7th Armies were pressing on towards Bohemia and Austria, overrunning Bavaria. In Italy the Allies were in full pursuit of the Germans attempting to retreat across the Po (see page 3716). In the north, British and Americans were across the Elbe (see page 3666), and, with Rokossovsky pressing on through





### RUSSIANS HEAD FOR THE REICH CAPITAL

Final Russian onslaught against Berlin began from the east on April 16, 1945, with the Oder and Neisse crossings. Nine days later, with the link-up between the 1st White Russian and 1st Ukrainian Armies, north-west of Potsdam, the capital's encirclement was complete. 1. Red Army tank heads for the city. 2. Soviet troops man a gun-post along a Berlin motor-road. Below, German river-craft abandoned on the Oder.

*Photos, Pictorial Press*



Pomerania and into Mecklenburg, retreat into Denmark offered the only hope of temporary escape.

On May 1 Hitler's death in Berlin and his succession by Grand Admiral Carl Doenitz was announced. On the following day the fall of Berlin after seventeen days' fierce fighting was proclaimed in Order of the Day No. 359 issued by Marshal Stalin: "Troops of the 1st White Russian Front commanded by Marshal Zhukov, with the support of troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front commanded by Marshal Koniev, after stiff street fighting, have today, May 2, completely captured Berlin, capital of Germany, centre of German imperialism, and hotbed of German aggression. The Berlin garrison, with General of Artillery Weidling and his staff at their head, ceased resistance at 3 p.m., laid down their arms, and surrendered. By 9 p.m. our troops had taken over 70,000 prisoners in Berlin" (in addition to more than 100,000 taken earlier in the fighting for the city).

This for the Russians meant a final triumph, exclusively their own and therefore probably even greater than the enemy's unconditional surrender to all the Allies which was to follow. It was saluted by 24 salvos from 324 guns in Moscow, where great victory celebrations were held. Never can revenge for unprovoked attack have been so complete, though the cost was terrific. To Marshal Stalin and to Zhukov it was a personal triumph; but to the Russian people who had seen their lands devastated and their families slaughtered or led into captivity it probably meant even more. To the world in general, which such a short time before had thought the fall of Leningrad, Moscow and Stalingrad inevitable, the Russian recovery was a sheer miracle. Even when the tide turned at Stalingrad and Germany's ultimate defeat could be predicted, few could have imagined that the Red Army would traverse those hundreds of miles to take the aggressor's capital by storm.

The speed with which Zhukov's offensive developed may produce the impression that it encountered feeble resistance, but it was undoubtedly one of the most remarkable feats accomplished by the Red Army. When he started Zhukov had secured only a tiny bridge-head, little over a mile deep, across the Oder. Most of the forty miles between the river and Berlin was intersected by trenches, houses were strongly fortified, and there were many water channels to be crossed. Nevertheless, after a three-day infantry and



artillery battle had broken the crust of the defence and extended the bridge-head, the main role was assigned to armoured formations. There was no question of making a gap, and the tanks, looking for weak spots, had to work their way through defences in depth. Their orders were to "by-pass cities and inhabited points and move forward in forced marches." Sappers accompanying the armour gave invaluable assistance by bridging canals, often under heavy fire. Manoeuvring ever more widely, in four days of incessant fighting the tanks reached the outskirts of Berlin only to find resistance stiffening. But a way had been opened for the infantry, and motorized divisions swung to the right, outflanking the city on the north. Then followed street fighting in which the Germans were either driven underground or attempted to hold the main public buildings in the heart of the city.

Tempelhof and its airfield were overrun on April 27. The outer districts of the city were captured in succession, Charlottenburg in the west, Moabit

#### Russian Gains in Berlin

in the north-west and Schöneberg in the south, by April 29. Mopping up had to be done thoroughly, for Germans concealed in cellars seized chances of emerging to attack forward Russian parties from the rear. The streets were often under cross-fire and progress could be made only by blasting a way through the walls of adjoining houses, as had been done in Vienna (see page 3627). As resistance in the suburban districts was broken, the Russians in ever stronger force and in a closer ring pressed on into the heart of the city where fanatical groups were holding the main government buildings.

The fight for the Reichstag alongside the Spree at the corner of the Tiergarten was particularly fierce, and marked the culmination of the struggle. For hours the Reichstag, neighbouring structures, and the Tiergarten were pounded from the air and by heavy guns and mortars. At first German anti-aircraft guns gave some protection, and transport aircraft attempted to maintain communications. But soon, as the guns were silenced, the aircraft that came in could not get out.

The final assault was delivered across the Spree under intensified supporting bombardment of the whole area. The Russian infantry made an astonishing charge over narrow footbridges and closed with the enemy in desperate hand-to-hand combat. In the peak of the struggle, an unknown man

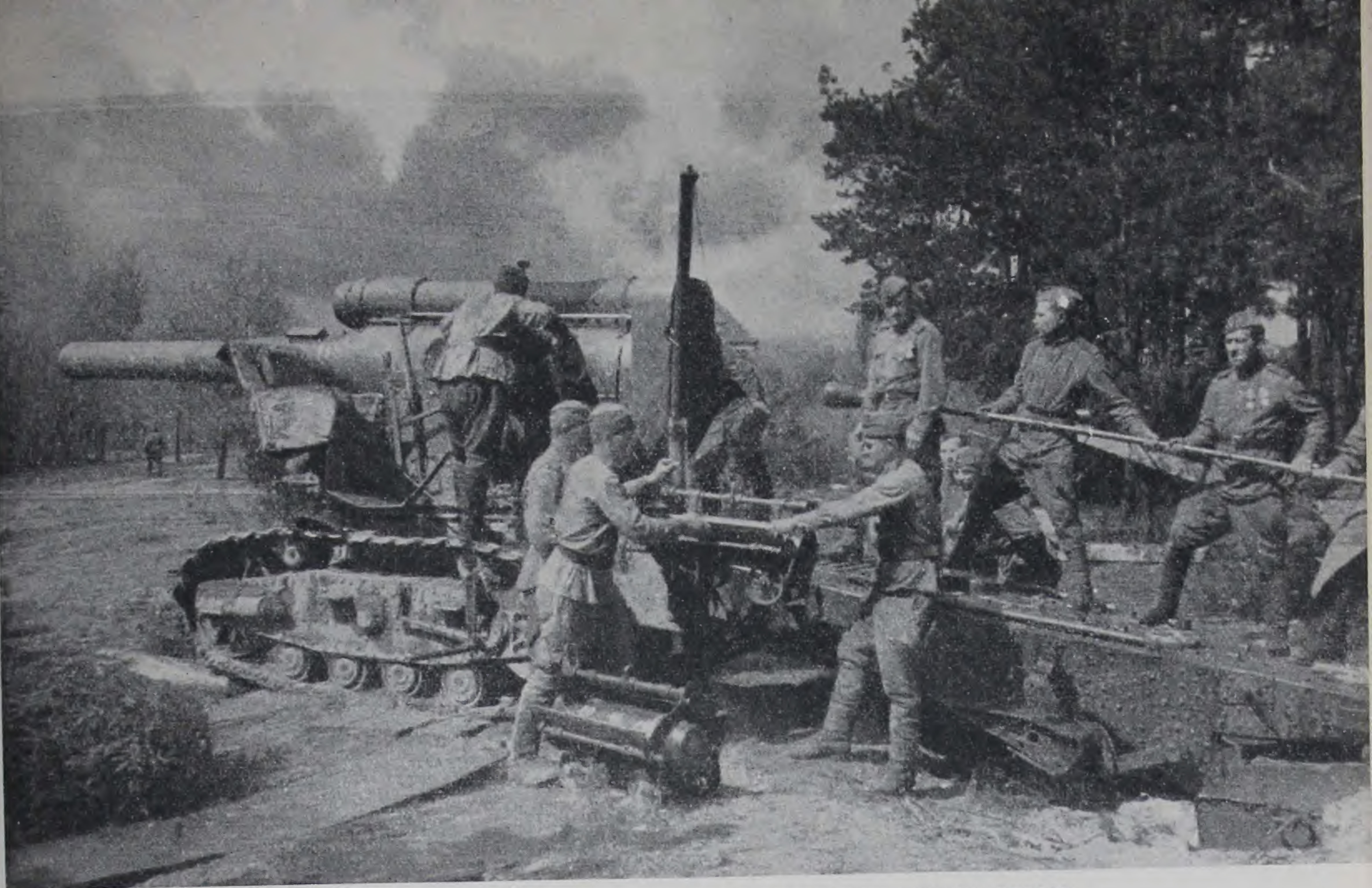


#### SOVIET DRIVE THROUGH UPPER SILESIA

The 1st Ukrainian Army under Marshal Koniev, in its drive through Upper Silesia, captured the powerful German defence point of Neisse on March 24, 1945. (1) Marshals Rotmistrov (see page 3223 and illus. in page 3077) and Koniev in a forward observation post during the offensive. (2) Soviet transport passes Nazi barricades and abandoned guns in the town of Neisse. (3) Wrecked German baggage train clutters the streets. *Photos, Pictorial Press*







### RED ARMY ARTILLERY SHELLS BERLIN

British and American military observers permitted to study the Red Army at the front paid high tribute to the precision of both Russian guns and Russian marksmanship. Soviet artillery played an important part in the capture of Berlin which fell on May 2, 1945, after 17 days of fierce fighting. Here Red Army gunners go into action on the outskirts of the Reich capital.

*Photo, Pictorial Press*

penetrated into the main building and from an upper window thrust out a Red banner evoking tumultuous cheers. A few minutes after that, the Red banner was hoisted on the roof as a symbol of victory.

The Russian troops were in a state of exaltation which allowed nothing to stop them, and it is not surprising that the Germans, assailed by tanks, close range artillery and frenzied infantry, lost their will to continue a hopeless struggle. Nevertheless, it was a cool, skilful and determined encircling manoeuvre that defeated the German defence so quickly.

The capture of Berlin virtually brought the war to an end. With Hitler's death it is clear that, with the exception of Shörner

#### German Commanders Give Up Hope

in Bohemia, all the high German commanders had given up hope of

continuing resistance either in the southern redoubt or by retreat into Denmark and Norway. The South-West Command, which included Italy and the southern provinces of Austria, surrendered to Field-Marshal Alexander on April 29 (see page 3717), and the whole of the troops in north-west Germany, Denmark and Holland to Field-Marshal Montgomery on May 4 (see page 3666). Desperate attempts were continued to escape surrender to

the Russians and at the last minute to drive a wedge into Allied unity. But, faced by the firm resolve of the Allies to accept nothing short of unconditional surrender and the continued advance of the Russians, the attempt was soon abandoned.

On May 3 Rokossovsky's forces joined hands at several points with those of Montgomery on the Wismar-Wittenberge line, and in the following days completed the capture of all German ports on the Baltic coast. Koniev was also advancing on Dresden and, despite stubborn resistance, stormed that city on May 8, shortly after the final act of Germany's unconditional surrender was ratified and confirmed in Berlin at 00.16 hours on May 8.

Thus the greatest war in history was brought to a formal end, and this time the signatures of the heads of all the German fighting Services gave indisputable proof that the reputedly invincible Wehrmacht acknowledged complete defeat.

The isolated outlying German groups quickly accepted the situation and followed the lead of the main army.

The largest group was that penned into the Courland promontory. The troops were in any case in a desperate situation, for Rokossovsky's drive along the Baltic coast had deprived them of the **Surrender in Courland** bases from which they had received supplies by sea. When their surrender was completed, May 13, they had eaten all their horses and were on the edge of starvation. In attempts to excuse the strategic blunder that had for so long left the remnants of two armies powerless to affect the situation, it was claimed that the force had retreated to Courland in order to stage a counter-offensive. In the end about 200,000 men laid down their arms there.

In East Prussia, Marshal Vassilievsky (3rd White Russian Army) captured Pillau on April 25, and though a die-hard remnant continued resistance in the sand dunes enclosing the Frisches Haff till Doenitz surrendered, virtually the whole Province had been cleared before May 8.

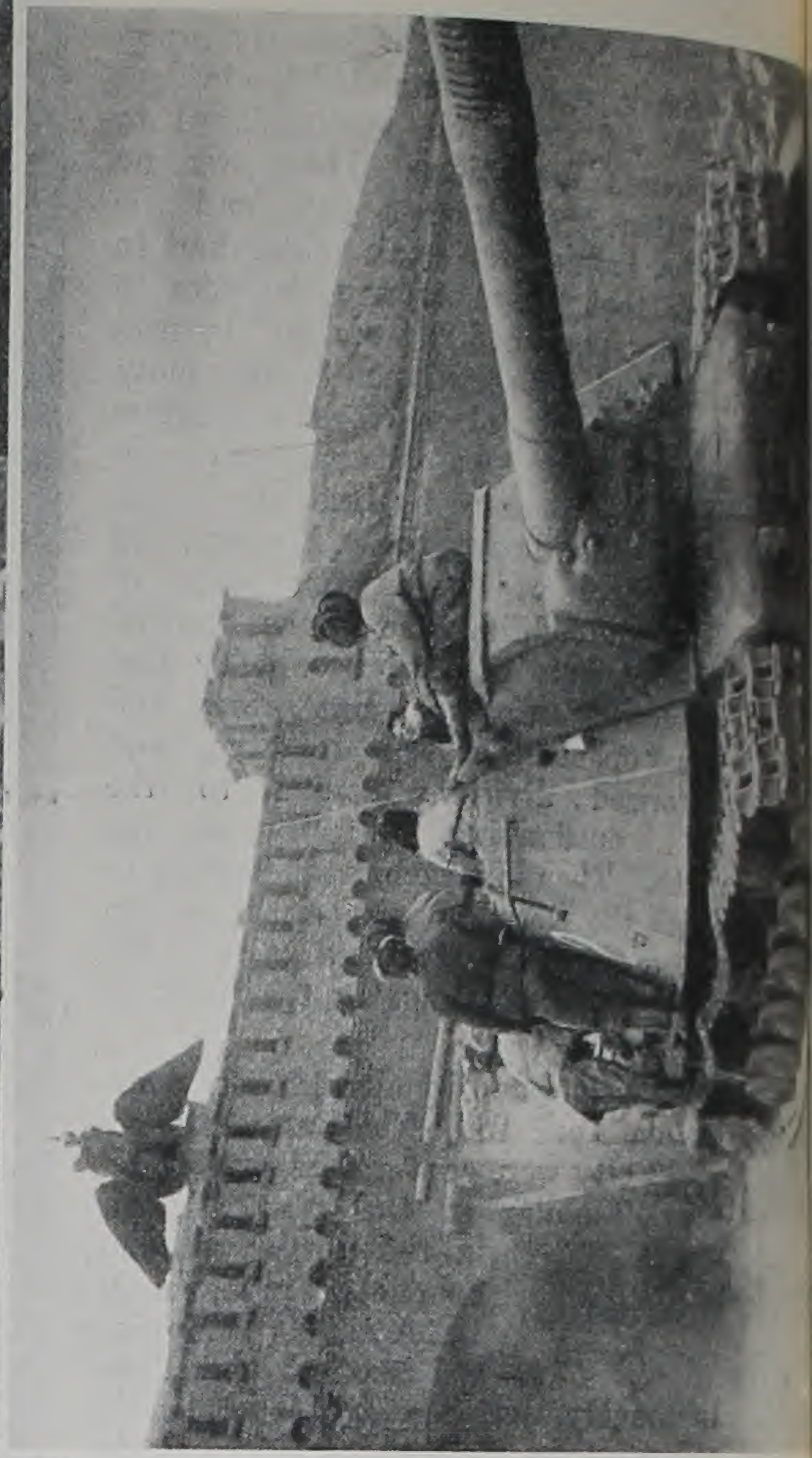
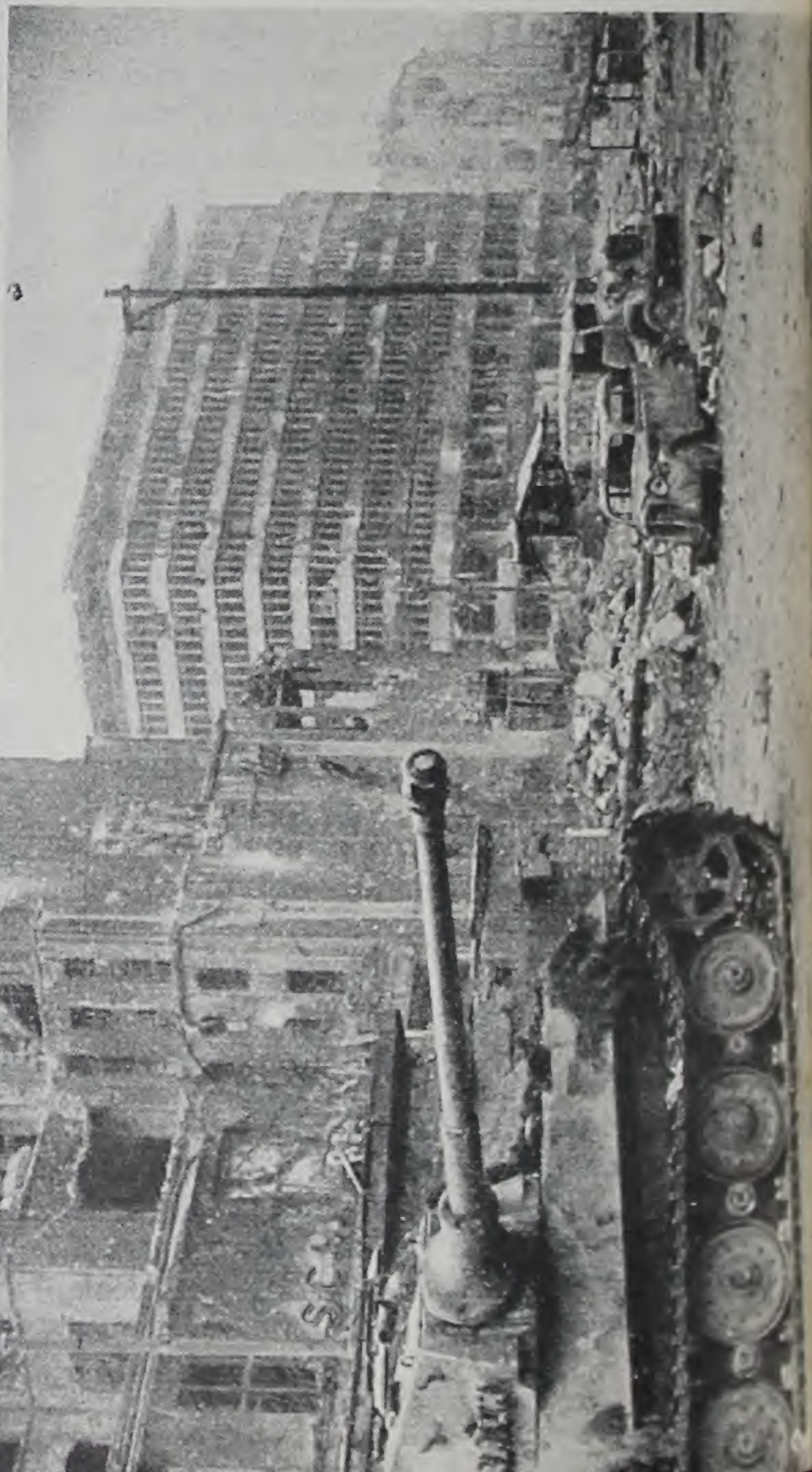
Only in Bohemia was there a deliberate attempt to carry on the struggle, but





### BATTLE FOR BERLIN

After stiff street fighting, during which the entire Government quarter of the city, including all the Ministries, was laid in ruins, Berlin was captured on May 2, 1945, by the 1st White Russian Army, commanded by Marshal Zhukov, with the support of the 1st Ukrainian Army under Marshal Koniev. The end came when Soviet forces met in the Tiergarten (see map) after a hard-fought advance from north and south. 1. Soviet mortar-crews in a residential quarter. 2. German 'King Tiger' tank disabled outside the ruined Potsdam Station (see map). 3. Soviet artillery enters the capital from the N.E.







#### ALLIED PENETRATION OF THE REICH ON APRIL 6, 1945 (Allied-held areas are shaded)

by May 10 Field-Marshal Schörner's troops (see page 3626), threatened with encirclement, began to surrender in disorderly scattered parties.

The completeness of the victory was, of course, mainly due to the spirit of unity that had been established between the Allies, and to the skill and loyalty

with which their efforts had been co-ordinated. To the Western Allies may be assigned the chief credit for frustrating German attempts to interrupt sea communications, for establishing a mastery over the Luftwaffe, and for disrupting from the air Germany's industrial capacity and internal mobility.

Their armies also intervened with decisive effect in the last years of the war.

Yet the part played by the Soviet Union by engaging and defeating the greater part of Germany's Army, the instrument on which she primarily relied, cannot be overestimated. It was undoubtedly the decisive factor in

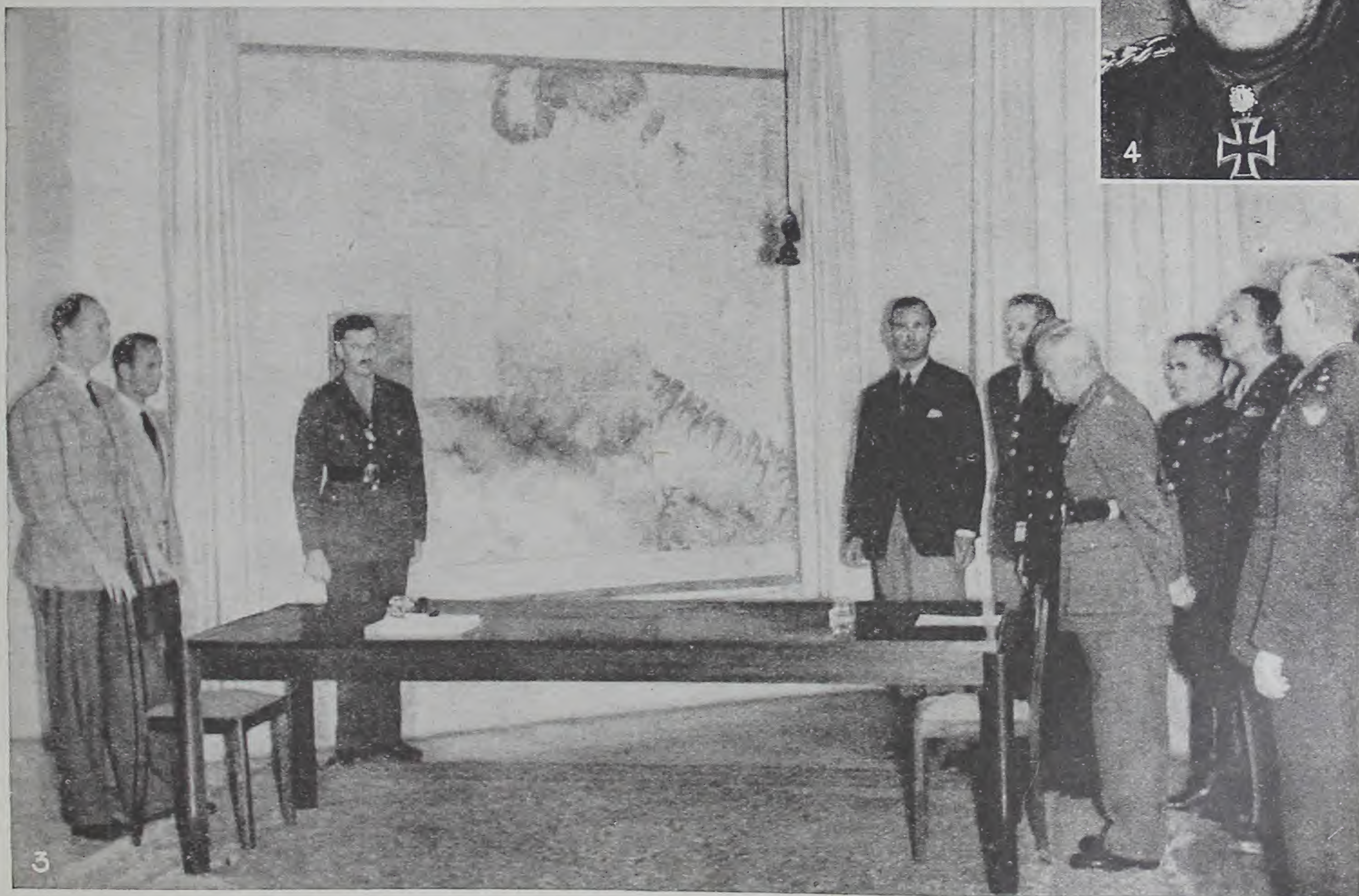




### WAR IN ITALY ENDS WITH GERMAN UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER

The Italian campaign ended on April 29, 1945, with the unconditional surrender by General Heinrich Gottfried von Vietinghoff-Scheel of all German and Italian-Fascist forces in northern Italy and western Austria, numbering nearly 1,000,000 men. The instrument of surrender was signed at Allied Force H.Q., Caserta, by two German agents in civilian clothes and by Lieutenant-General W. D. Morgan, Chief of Staff of Allied Force H.Q. One German signed on behalf of General von Vietinghoff-Scheel and the other on behalf of Obergruppenführer Karl Wolff, supreme commander of the S.S. and German police in Italy. 1. One of the German representatives signs the surrender. 2. Lieutenant-General Morgan signs on behalf of the Allies. 3. Scene of the ceremony, with the Germans on the extreme left and Lieutenant-General Morgan, with head bowed, on the right. 4. General von Vietinghoff-Scheel.

*Photos, British Official; Associated Press*







#### RUSSIANS TAKE BRESLAU AFTER EIGHTY-TWO DAYS' SIEGE

Troops of the 1st Ukrainian Army, under Marshal Koniev, on May 7, 1945, completely captured the city and fortress of Breslau, capital of Silesia, on the River Oder. The Germans had earlier announced the garrison's surrender because of lack of supplies after a siege which had begun on February 14 and lasted 82 days. The Germans, headed by the fortress commander, General von Niklos, and his staff, laid down their arms and surrendered to the Russians. Since its investment, the city had been crumbling to pieces, block by block, in bitter street fighting of the kind shown here.

*Photo, Pictorial Press*





### RED ARMY HAILS CAPTURE OF THE REICH CAPITAL

'A city of death and destruction,' surpassing in its horror even Warsaw and Leningrad, was how Russian observers described Berlin after its fall to the Red Army on May 2, 1945. The city was taken block by block in 17 days' bitter street fighting with remnants of the German 9th Army, S.S. troops and other fanatical Nazis holding out till the end. Above, men of a Red Army tank unit hail their triumph in the Königs-Platz. The 1870 Victory column is in the background. Below, Russian patrols approach the ruined Reichstag, over which the Red Flag was hoisted on April 30.

*Photos, Pictorial Press*

4 D







#### HITLER'S 'LAST STAND' TROOPS IN BERLIN MARCH TO CAPTIVITY

After Berlin had finally surrendered to the Red Army at 3 p.m. on May 2, 1945, straggling columns of German prisoners, many halt-crazed by the ordeal through which they had come, began to be marched to prison camps on the city's outskirts. Many laughed hysterically and could not stop laughing as they trailed through the shattered city. Here, some of the 120,000 prisoners taken in eight days' fighting for the capital emerge from a ruined building on their way to captivity. Hundreds of German military engineers were at once ordered to restore Berlin's public services put out of commission in the fighting.

*Photo Pictorial Press*



making victory complete and in saving the Western Allies, if not from defeat, at least from being unable to develop decisive offensive power. No one has more frankly and fully admitted the debt the Western Allies owe to the Soviet Union than Mr. Churchill, and he of all men should be best qualified to judge.

Russia received material assistance from the industrial resources of Britain and America, and she benefited increasingly by the destructive effects of the western air offensive. But it must always be remembered that from the moment Russia was attacked the Luftwaffe's offensive against Britain virtually ceased. Its engagement on the Russian front, and possibly even more the diversion of Germany's industrial capacity to meet wastage on that front, prevented a renewal of full scale air attack. If Russia had collapsed or been rendered impotent as a result of her early defeats, it is questionable whether under renewed air attack by the Luftwaffe and a possible earlier appearance of Hitler's secret weapons in consequence of reduced demands on his industrial resources, Britain could have remained the secure base from which the Allied western offensive

developed. During Russia's period of greatest danger, Great Britain was sending her all the assistance she could, but Pearl Harbor had not yet forced the U.S.A. into the war, and by the time it did the first crisis at Moscow had passed; and although Germany, in view of Britain's amphibious potentialities, maintained substantial forces to guard the western sea board, that did not materially affect the strength of the forces initially used against the U.S.S.R. Almost certainly, the greatest benefit Russia derived from British action at that critical time was the postponement of the date of the German onslaught, owing to the diversion of the Luftwaffe to the capture of Crete and to the losses it suffered then. That postponement in all probability had far-reaching results, for it may have saved Moscow by involving the Germans in a disastrous winter campaign. If that was the result, seldom can an apparently disastrous episode have produced such favourable strategical consequences.

Nevertheless, it was mainly due to her own efforts that Russia survived the initial German onslaught; and the postponement of Hitler's attack would not have mattered if his confident belief in decisive victory within three months had been well based.

Failure to capture Moscow, and enforced withdrawal under the pressure of the astonishingly prompt and fierce counter-offensive which Zhukov had prepared, brought the Germans, as they themselves admit, to the brink of complete disaster. They may have been saved by their executive skill, but the exceptional severity of the winter, which affected even the suitably clothed Russians, contributed to their escape. This was nevertheless perhaps the real turning point of the war. Coinciding as it did with the addition of America with all its resources to the Allied ranks, Germany's ultimate defeat could thereafter confidently be predicted. She had lost many of her best war experienced troops, the reputation of her army for invincibility, especially under winter conditions, had been shattered. Even in her southern drive, where her success had been greatest, she suffered a set-back when the Russians recaptured Rostov on November 28, six days after the Germans took it, and Sevastopol held out.

But Germany still retained great offensive power, and in the summer of 1942 she displayed her remarkable power of recovery. She was able to mount a formidable offensive although she had increasingly to rely on satellite troops and formations of second-class quality to hold comparatively quiet sectors. It has been argued that the Russians had never to meet German troops of as uniform high quality as those the western Allies encountered in Africa and Italy. Considering the vast area covered by operations in Russia, that may be partly true, and certainly after 1941 elements of weakness were revealed of which the Russians were quick to take advantage. But for offensive purposes high quality German troops were always available, and it was in defence that weaknesses were chiefly discovered.

Successful as the 1942 German offensive was in overrunning valuable territory, it failed to destroy the Russian southern armies and left those of the centre and north and in reserve comparatively free to prepare for the counter-stroke. Timoshenko, though defeated, by rapid retreat saved his armies, and, rallying at Stalingrad and in the Caucasus, brought the German drive to a standstill. Moreover, the determined stand made at Voronezh forced the Germans to modify their plans, and kept open railway communications from Moscow towards Stalingrad. The Soviet counter-offensive at Stalingrad, which trapped

#### Summer Campaign, 1942

## CAMPAIGN ON THE EASTERN FRONT

*As a conclusion to his detailed account of events on the eastern front, begun in Chapter 181 and continued at intervals in other chapters through this HISTORY OF THE SECOND GREAT WAR, General Gwynn summarizes the great movements of this stupendous campaign from 1941 to 1945*

At the end of the first month of the invasion, the Germans claimed that the Russians were on the brink of collapse, having lost all control and become capable of only local resistance. Yet stubborn fighting in the Smolensk region and in the approaches to Leningrad had already begun to check the impetus of the offensive. The evacuation of Smolensk, announced on August 13, 1941, had taken place only a few days earlier and the threat to Leningrad did not reach its maximum till September 8. Timoshenko's counter-offensive east of Smolensk during September forced the Germans on to the defensive, and it was not till October 3 that they were able to resume their drive towards Moscow which was to end in the disastrous winter campaign.

The time gained by Timoshenko was therefore to prove of the utmost importance; but the resistance of Leningrad had more immediate and permanent results. Although cut off completely by land, it stood siege under conditions of appalling suffering from starvation,

cold and constant air and artillery bombardment for over two years, and eventually became the base for a highly important counter-offensive. During that period it not only brought the German northern offensive to a halt, thus protecting the communications from Murmansk and Archangel to Moscow, but contained very considerable German forces. The siege, partly no doubt owing to its great length, has attracted attention mainly as an example of amazing endurance, but the strategic results it achieved with the assistance of Voroshilov's field armies should not be under-estimated.

Events on the Leningrad front were, of course, overshadowed by the desperate fighting to save Moscow after Hitler, on October 3, launched the offensive he believed would prove decisive. There, as at Leningrad, much of the credit for the stubbornness of the defence directed by Zhukov should go to the civil population, but undoubtedly it was winter and German unpreparedness to meet its rigour that saved the city.





### RED ARMY ADVANCES INTO POMERANIA

On March 5, 1945, Marshal Zhukov's 1st White Russian Army captured Stargard, Naugard and Polzin, powerful strongpoints in the German defences in the Stettin area, forestalling an enemy counter-plan aimed at the right flank of the Soviet salient. Above, German refugees' 'covered wagons' trek westwards in Pomerania. Below, Russian cavalry enter Naugard, 30 miles north-east of Stettin.

*Photos, Pictorial Press*

Paulus's army and started the second Russian winter offensive, was undoubtedly the decisive turning point of the war, synchronizing as it did with the defeat of Rommel at El Alamein and the opening of the Tunisian front.

From that time onwards the North African and Italian operations constituted an effective second front, all the more because the German forces engaged there perforce had to be of high quality owing to their comparatively small size and the high standard of armament of the Western Powers.

The Russian winter campaign of 1942-3 was amazingly successful, though it ended with a serious reverse; but not before the Germans, desperately battered, had been driven back to and beyond their starting point of the previous summer, and had been compelled to draw on their main strategic reserves.

The results of the winter campaign of 1942-43 made it clear that Germany could no longer hope to bring about a

Russian complete Russian collapse; but it was still open to question whether by exploiting

her apparent superiority under summer conditions Germany might be able to establish a firm defensive front in Russia, leaving her in possession of vast territories of great economic value and with opportunities for employing her strategic reserves against the Western Allies should they attempt to land in France. There was every sign that Russia intended to exploit during the summer the offensive power she had developed, but equally there were signs that the Germans, still trusting to superiority under summer conditions, would not stand passively on the



defensive but would attack, if only to break up Russian offensive preparations and to secure a more favourable stabilization line.

In the event the Germans struck first, the Russians apparently having deliberately awaited attack in defensive positions against which they hoped the Germans would shatter their armour. The great battle of the Kursk salient (July 1943) which resulted, proved conclusively that the Germans had met their masters under all conditions. Their offensive, in spite of some initial success, broke down, and the great Russian counter-offensive which had begun at Stalingrad was resumed and was maintained virtually without intermission to the end. Even when a pause on certain sectors of the front

became necessary, another flared into activity.

Defeated in the Kursk salient, the Germans were left with no alternative but to withdraw as speedily as possible to the Dnieper and Melitopol line while Germans retaining their positions in the Crimea Withdraw to the Dnieper and in the north round Leningrad. It must be admitted that their withdrawal was skilful, but Russian pursuit was fierce, and before a rallying position on the Dnieper could be effectively occupied Soviet forces secured bridge-heads across the river.

When Tolbukhin broke the Melitopol line, Koniev thrust from Kremenchug towards Krivoi Rog, and Vatutin took Kiev, it was clear that the Dnieper line was crumbling. But Vatutin's bold thrust westwards from Kiev implied a greater danger, for it threatened

the main line of communication of all the Germans in the Ukraine. Von Manstein was compelled to concentrate his reserves to meet it; and he was able to draw on the Reichswehr's central reserves, for till after the winter the Allies could not open their expected attack in the west.

Without time for full preparation, the counter-stroke with which Von Manstein attempted to crush Vatutin and restore the situation was perforce delivered piecemeal as his reserves arrived, and though it recovered some ground it did little more than delay Vatutin's offensive. Its partial success may have encouraged Hitler to cling to dangerously exposed positions in the Dnieper bend.

The Russian offensive continued to develop and before the spring thaw



(1944) brought it to a pause the whole of the Ukraine was recaptured and all the German forces in it, having suffered heavy disasters, withdrew in divergent directions, part to cover Rumania, part into Poland. As a final blow Tolbukhin recaptured the Crimea.

The annihilation of Von Arnim's army in Tunisia and the subsequent invasion of Sicily and Italy may well

#### German Failure to Rally

have contributed to the German failure to rally on the Dnieper, and intensification of the Allied air offensive had also begun materially to affect the issue; in particular it made it increasingly important for the Germans to protect the oilfields of Rumania and the war industries of Italy. It was an astonishing feat for the Red Army to have maintained a virtually uninterrupted offensive for ten months during which it advanced over 500 miles, through country twice devastated by the tide of war, and fought many hard engagements. No clearer proof could have been given of the completeness of Russian recovery and of the offensive power developed under all conditions coupled, evidently, with remarkable administrative capacity. The subsidiary offensive which in January 1944 raised the siege of Leningrad, and left the Germans in a dangerous salient in Latvia and Estonia, proved how uniform the recovery had been.

The Soviet offensive was resumed in the summer of 1944 after a surprisingly

short pause. The attack by the three White Russian Armies was admirably conceived and carried through with devastating results. It was delivered almost immediately the success of the Normandy landing was assured. The offensive was soon taken up all along the front and did not pause till in the centre the frontiers of East Prussia and the line of the Vistula had been reached. In the north the Germans in Latvia and Estonia were completely isolated by the three Baltic Armies, while in the south, after Rumania and Bulgaria had been forced to change sides, the offensive was maintained to the end without a pause.

After the reopening of the western front the successive waves of the Allied offensive were synchronized as far as practicable, although pre-arranged dates may have been upset by particular events. Thus Zhukov's great drive from the Vistula to the Oder in January 1945 had probably been intended to coincide with the battle of the Rhineland, which was delayed by Rundstedt's Ardennes offensive. Thereafter the crossing of the Rhine and collapse of German resistance in the west may have come earlier than the date Zhukov was working to for his Oder offensive. On the whole, however, the final

blows of the Allies were admirably coordinated, and Mr. Churchill has testified to the punctuality with which the Russians fulfilled their promises. Both he and General Marshall agree that even after the western front was fully developed, the Russians had still to deal with two-thirds of the German Army.

To what should we ascribe Russia's amazing recovery apart from the fact that she had immense man-power resources to draw on? Primarily it was the courage, patient endurance and amazing physical strength of the Rus-



#### RUSSO-AMERICAN LINK-UP AT TORGAU

Allied troops from the east and west joined forces for the first time at Torgau, thirty miles northeast of Leipzig, on April 26, 1945. Here, Russians and Americans chat across the bonnet of a jeep. Above, Major-General E. F. Reinhardt, commanding the U.S. 69th Division, with Major-General Rusakov, commander of the Soviet 58th Guards Division.

Photos, Pictorial Press

sian soldier, all the more astonishing in view of the many different races and surroundings from which he came.

Secondly, Russia was fortunate in producing leaders who refused to accept defeat and developed into commanders of exceptional brilliance. It was probably advisable to replace the older commanders by men who had acquired in the first year of the war intimate experience of modern conditions, but once the latter had been placed in high command it is evident that they commanded confidence to a remarkable degree. Compared with the constant dismissals of German commanders, the security of tenure enjoyed by Russian generals is all the more notable.

The Russian system of training must have been astonishingly efficient to ensure replacement of the desperately heavy casualties by an unending stream of well-trained men. But perhaps the most surprising achievement was that of the administrative Services which kept the huge machine in motion.